

THE GOLDEN ASS
OF LUCIUS APULEIUS

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APULEIUS AND THIASUS

THE GOLDEN ASS OF LUCIUS APULEIUS

IN THE TRANSLATION BY
WILLIAM ADLINGTON

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION,
BY
F. J. HARVEY DARTON
SOMETIME SCHOLAR OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
OXFORD

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND
DECORATIONS BY*
PHILIP HAGREEN



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*With numerous Decorations
as occasion serves*



EPISTLE DEDICATORY

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND MIGHTY LORD,
THOMAS, EARL OF SUSSEX, VISCOUNT FITZ-
WALTER, LORD OF EGREMONT AND OF BURNELL,
KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE
GARTER, JUSTICE OF THE FORESTS AND CHASES
FROM TRENT SOUTHWARD, AND CAPTAIN OF
THE GENTLEMEN PENSIONERS OF THE HOUSE
OF THE QUEEN OUR SOVEREIGN LADY

AFTER I had taken upon me (Right Honourable), in manner of that unlearned and foolish poet Cherillus (who rashly, and unadvisedly, wrote a big volume in verses of the gestes and valiant prowess of Alexander the Great), to translate this present book, containing the *Metamorphose* of Lucius Apuleius, being moved thereunto by the right pleasant pastime and delectable matter therein, I eftsoons consulted with myself to whom I might best offer so pleasant and worthy a work, devised by the author, it being now barbarously and simply framed in our English tongue. And after long deliberation had, your Honourable Lordship came to my remembrance, a man much more worthy than to whom so homely and rude a translation should be presented. But when I again remembered the jesting and sportful matter

of the book, unfit to be offered to any man of gravity and wisdom, I was wholly determined to make no *Epistle Dedicatory* at all : till now of late, persuaded thereunto by my friends, I have boldly enterprised to offer the same to your Lordship, who as I trust will with no less good will accept the same than if it did entreat of some serious and lofty matter, considering that although the matter therein seem very light and merry, yet the effect thereof tendeth to a good and virtuous moral, as in the following *Epistle to the Reader* may be clearly perceived. For so have all writers in times past employed their travail and labours, that their posterity might receive some fruitful profit by the same. And therefore the poets feigned not their fables in vain, considering that children in time of their first studies are much allured thereby to proceed to more grave and deep disciplines, whereas otherwise their minds would quickly loathe the wise and prudent works of learned men, wherein in such unripe years they take no spark of delectation at all.

And not only that profit ariseth to children by such feigned fables, but also the virtues of men are covertly thereby commended, and their vices discommended and abhorred. For by the fable of Actæon, where it is feigned that when he saw Diana washing herself in a well he was immediately turned into a hart and so was slain of his own dogs, may be meant that when a man casteth his eyes on the vain and soon-fading beauty of the world, consenting thereto in his mind, he

seems to be turned into a brute beast, and so to be slain through the inordinate desire of his own affects. Tantalus that stands in the midst of the flood Eridan, having before him a tree laden with pleasant apples, he being nevertheless always thirsty and hungry, betokens the insatiable desire of covetous persons. The fables of Atreus, Thyestes, Tereus and Progne signify the wicked and abominable acts wrought and attempted by mortal men. The fall of Icarus is an example to proud and arrogant persons that ween to climb up to the heavens. By Midas, who obtained of Bacchus that all things which he touched might be gold, is carped the foul sin of avarice. By Phaethon, that unskilfully took in hand to rule the chariot of the sun, are represented those persons who attempt things passing their power and capacity. By Castor and Pollux, turned into a sign in heaven called Gemini, is signified that virtuous and godly persons shall be rewarded after life with perpetual bliss. And in this fable or feigned jest of Lucius Apuleius is comprehended a figure of man's life, ministering most sweet and delectable matter to such as shall be desirous to read the same. The which if your Honourable Lordship shall accept and take in good part, I shall not only think my small travail and labour well employed, but also receive a further comfort to attempt some more serious matter, which may be more acceptable to your Lordship: desiring the same to excuse my rash and bold enterprise at this time, as I nothing doubt in your

Lordship's goodness. To whom I beseech Almighty God to impart long life, with increase of much honour.

From University College in Oxford, the xviii of September 1566.

Your Honour's most bounden,

WILLIAM ADLINGTON.



TO THE READER

WHEN I had (gentle reader) slightly here and there run over the pleasant and delectable jests of Lucius Apuleius (a man of ancient descent, and endowed with singular learning), written in such a frank and flourishing style as he seemed to have the Muses always at will to feed and maintain his pen; and when again I perceived the matter to minister such exceeding plenty of mirth as never (in my judgment) the like hath been showed by any other, I purposed according to my slender knowledge (though it were rudely, and far disagreeing from the fine and excellent doings nowadays) to translate the same into our vulgar tongue, to the end that amongst so many sage and serious works (as every man well-nigh endeavours daily to increase) there might be some fresh and pleasant matter to recreate the minds of the readers withal; howbeit, I was eftsoons driven from my purpose by two causes: First, perceiving that the author had written his work in so dark and high a style, in so strange and absurd words, and in such new invented phrases, as he seemed rather to set it forth to show his magnificence of prose than to participate his doings to others: Secondly, fearing

lest the translation of this present book (which seemeth a mere jest and table, and a work worthy to be laughed at, by reason of the vanity of the author) might be contemned and despised of all men, and so, consequently, I to be had in derision, to occupy myself in such frivolous and trifling toys : but on the other side, when I had thoroughly learned the intent of the author, and the purpose why he invented so sportful a jest, I was verily persuaded that my small travail should not only be accepted of many, but the matter itself allowed and praised of all. Wherefore I intend (God willing), as nigh as I can, to utter and open the meaning thereof to the simple and ignorant, whereby they may not take the same as a thing only to jest and laugh at (for the fables of Æsop and the feigning of poets were never written for that purpose), but by the pleasantness thereof be rather induced to the knowledge of their present estate, and thereby transform themselves into the right and perfect shape of men. The argument of the book is : How Lucius Apuleius, the author himself, travelled into Thessaly (being a region in Greece where all the women for the most part be such wonderful witches that they can transform men into the figure of beasts), where, after he had continued a few days, by the mighty force of a violent confection, he was changed into a miserable ass, and nothing might reduce him to his wonted shape but the eating of a rose, which, after endurance of infinite sorrow, at length he obtained by prayer.

Verily under the wrap of this transformation is taxed the life of mortal men, when we suffer our minds so to be drowned in the sensual lusts of the flesh, and the beastly pleasure thereof (which aptly may be called the violent confection of witches), that we lose wholly the use of reason and virtue (which properly should be in man) and play the parts of brute and savage beasts. By like occasion we read how divers of the companions of Ulysses were turned by the marvellous power of Circe into swine. And find we not in the Scripture that Nabuchodonoser the ninth King of Babylon, by reason of his great dominions and realms, fell into such exceeding pride that he was suddenly transformed of Almighty God into a horrible monster, having the head of an ox, the feet of a bear, and the tail of a lion, and did eat hay as a beast? But as Lucius Apuleius was changed into his human shape by a rose, the companions of Ulysses by great intercession, and Nabuchodonoser by the continual prayers of Daniel, whereby they knew themselves, and lived after a good and virtuous life, so can we never be restored to the right figure of ourselves except we taste and eat the sweet rose of reason and virtue, which the rather by mediation of prayer we may assuredly attain.

Again, may not the meaning of this work be altered and turned in this sort? A man desirous to apply his mind to some excellent art, or given to the study of any of the sciences, at the first appeareth to himself an ass without wit, without

knowledge, and not much unlike a brute beast, till such time as by much pain and travail he hath achieved to the perfectness of the same, and tasting the sweet flower and fruit of his studies doth think himself well brought to the right and very shape of a man.

Finally the *Metamorphose* of L. Apuleius may be resembled to youth without discretion, and his reduction to age possessed with wisdom and virtue.

Now since this book of Lucius is a figure of man's life, and toucheth the nature and manners of mortal men, egging them forward from their asinine form to their human and perfect shape, beside the pleasant and delectable jests therein contained, I trust if my simple translation be nothing accepted, yet the matter itself shall be esteemed by such as not only delight to please their fancy in reading the same, but also take a pattern thereby, to regenerate their minds from brutish and beastly custom. Howbeit, I have not so exactly passed through the author as to point every sentence according as it is in Latin, or so absolutely translated every word as it lieth in the prose (for so the French and Spanish translators have not done), considering the same in our vulgar tongue would have appeared very obscure and dark, and thereby, consequently, loathsome to the reader ; but nothing erring as I trust from the given and natural meaning of the author have used more common and familiar words (yet not so much as I might do) for the plainer

setting forth of the same. But howsoever it be (gentle reader), I pray thee take it in good part, considering that for thee I have taken this pain, to the intent that thou mayst read the same with pleasure.



THE PREFACE OF THE AUTHOR TO HIS SON FAUSTINUS, AND TO THE READERS OF THIS BOOK

That I to thee some joyous jests may show in gentle glose,
And frankly feed thy bended ears with passing pleasant prose :
So that thou deign in seemly sort this wanton book to view,
That is set out and garnished fine, with written phrases new.
I will declare how one by hap his human figure lost,
And how in brutish formed shape his loathed life he tossed :
And how he was in course of time from such estate unfold,
Who eftsoons turned to pristine shape, his lot unlucky told.

WHAT and who he was, attend awhile
and you shall understand that it
was even I, the writer of my own
Metamorphose, and strange alteration of figure.
Hymettus, Athens, Isthmia, Ephire, Tenaros
and Sparta, being fat and fertile soils (as I pray
you give credit to the books of more everlasting
fame), be places where my ancient progeny and
lineage did sometime flourish : there, I say, in
Athens when I was young, I went first to school.
Soon after (as a stranger) I arrived at Rome,
whereas by great industry and without instruction
of any schoolmaster I achieved to the full perfec-
tion of the Latin tongue : behold, I first crave
and beg your pardon, lest I should happen to dis-
please or offend any of you by the rude and rustic

utterance of this strange and foreign language. And verily this new alteration of speech doth correspond to the enterprised matter whereof I purpose to entreat I will set forth unto you a pleasant Grecian jest. Whereunto, gentle reader, if thou wilt give attendant ear, it will minister unto thee such delectable matter as thou shalt be well contented withal.



INTRODUCTION

EVEN bad men love donkeys. Their strange stubborn intelligence, their whimsical physique, their colouring, their almost conscious sense of humour, give them a curiously human and intimate personality. It was something like genius that made Lucius Apuleius choose, for the central figure of the great novel in which he reveals (as nowhere else in his writings) his many-hued character and experience, a mere poor ass—a beast honourable in many times and places, but here bearing the burden of extravagant learning and the secular traditions of the world. Rightly did men hasten to rename the *Metamorphose*—its true title—*The Golden Ass*.

The story itself is as strange as its author's life. Apuleius was born somewhere about A.D. 120, at Madaura (a *colonia* enjoying Roman citizenship rights), still known as Mda Urush, in Numidia, near the borders of modern Tunis. He was educated first at Carthage (his father being a wealthy man), and afterwards, perhaps because of the Platonist cast of his mind, at Athens, where, as Adlington's brief Introduction says, "he tasted many of the cups of the Muses, he learned poetry, geometry, music, logic, and the universal knowledge of philosophy, and studied not in vain the

Nine Muses." Thereafter he travelled in Asia Minor, and on his return to Greece became attracted at Corinth by the mysteries of Isis. Thence he went to Rome, and gave discourses and practised the law. *The Golden Ass* was published there, and by its immediate popularity added to the name his florid lectures had won for him. Finally he returned to Africa, and won some fame as—shall I say a publicist? By his own account he became, on the inspiration of Osiris, a "decurion and senator, and executed my office in great joy with a shaven crown"—a reference apparently to the curious fact that he had been initiated into the mysteries of Isis, with a view to the priesthood, and (unless he was a "stickit minister") either renounced his orders or was unfrocked. (One need not hesitate about anachronistic terms in relation to Apuleius; the *Metamorphose* is a mosaic of heterogeneous thought, life and speech.)

Some of these facts come from *The Golden Ass* itself, the final pages of which appear to be autobiographical, as are a few small details elsewhere in the story. For the rest of his life two of his other works are the chief authority—the *Florida* (a set of something like essays, or prose extracts from his discourses, on all manner of subjects, from parrots to Alexander the Great) and the *Apologia*. The *Apologia* arose out of an incident on a journey he took to Egypt. On his way back he "was laid up" at Oea (Tripoli), and there abode a considerable time. He "gave a

discourse in public," and—by his own account—was much applauded. He happened to know one Pontianus, the son of a well-to-do but not exactly youthful widow of that town, Pudentilla, a lady who had very judiciously evaded a second marriage with a certain Sicilianus Clorus ("a boorish and decrepit old man") long enough to see him die. Apuleius met this lady, whom he describes (in her son's words) as "a woman of plain appearance," but also (in his own) as "in the flower of her age," and eventually married her.

The result was that Æmilianus, brother of the late boorish Clorus, accused Apuleius of sorcery, and of marrying Pudentilla for her money (she was apparently aged about forty). The *Apologia* is his successful and triumphant defence, written in a style of exuberant egotism.

He was a voluminous writer, lacking the concentration of pure genius, but much more than a mere hack. He turned his hand to adorning—or at any rate rewriting or translating—much ready-made material on all sorts of subjects. It is, however, only in *The Golden Ass*, of his surviving works, that he transcends fashion and necessity of earning his living. Into it he puts all the odds and ends of his adventurous life and his multifarious knowledge. In it he becomes a human being, full of recondite beliefs and customs, poetical, observant, a sympathiser with rogues, vagabonds and poor men, even with lewd women, a lover of beauty, but informed with a humour

sometimes witty and often fierce, and a real authority on witchcraft and exotic religions.

He is an encyclopædia of his century's troubled mind. Consider the world into which he was born. It is a singular comment upon the classical education of to-day that (in respect of the original Latin tongue) it usually, except for professed scholars, stops short at the year of the three emperors and the end of the greater literary tradition of Rome.

It is between a welter of domestic history and a huger, even more fantastic, confusion of world-history, that Apuleius stands. The old austere Republic had really perished two generations before Christ, when personal power, violently used, began, with Marius and Sulla, to supersede the authority of official position. Law crumbled as its sanctions were found impotent. There came the crossing of a little brook in Northern Italy, and Julius Cæsar ran through the European world with winged feet. The daggers of the money-lending Brutus—for the noblest Roman of them all was a callous usurer—and his fellows, a shrill squeal of delight from Greek-speaking Cicero, more civil war, and even the form of the Republic vanished. And then more civil war, and the cold craft of Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus Augustus begat the open monarchy and the influences of a Court. But Imperial Cæsar was not a consistent god: the gloomy Tiberius and the murdered Caligula; the poor "cabbage-god" Claudius, under whom the distant barbarian isle

of Britain was really conquered; Nero's five years of excellence and eight of vileness; the three emperors to whom the strong military rulers succeeded—those were the political deities whom provincial Apuleius inherited when he was in Rome under that immortal prig, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

But if most of what in its ideal state made Rome Rome, even to the Romans themselves, seemed to have disappeared or changed, so too had mutability come upon the stately Latin tongue. There were no doubt in Apuleius' day those who stood by Vergil—Vergil, whose just pride in the best aspects of Roman rule had bade her citizens spread peace on earth only a few years before other messengers had said the same thing to the Jews; others who lamented the lost elegance of Horace, that sleek pigling of Epicurus' herd, or the sonorous austerity of Lucretius, or even (as we might deplore the neglect of Elizabethan comedy) the humours of Plautus and Terence. But Juvenal had openly announced of literature (as Tacitus did of morals) that it had gone to the demnition bow-wows; and from the conservative point of view he was certainly right.

But Apuleius, Lucian and Petronius were not writing either for or about Augustan Rome. They were in a Rome whose mental frontiers new faiths were invading, as the barbarians in the North and East were battering at the walls of her territorial empire. Already Nero had burnt Christians in the city whose eternity they were to

complete. Already Mithras had come from the Far East, and from Egypt Isis, Apuleius' own protectress. Even under Augustus Catullus had seen the results of a grand tour of Asia, and chronicled in his intricate Galliambics the un-Roman ecstasy of Atys. And Apuleius, as it might be a *babu* arriving to lecture in London to-day, was an African.

Nor was it only in its thought that literature was changing (we cannot now say decaying, as Juvenal did—when satire deals with contemporary beliefs, Time nearly always defeats it). Its very voice was being altered. Apuleius' own style is a document of the revolution that was to turn Latin into French, Italian, Spanish, and, in part, English. It is full of provincial words, bizarre constructions: it is even less like classical Latin than the Greek of the New Testament is like classical Greek, though, like the Hellenistic Greek, it has the virtue of being a straightforward vehicle of thought, regardless of authorised form. It is the beginning of that Romance tongue which the soldiers of the Empire, drawn from the provinces, were to give to Rome, and which Rome's great organisation of transport and communications was to give back to the world. There were always two tongues in the Latin language as we know it, and in others, just as there are in the English of to-day; but of that more when I speak of the best English translator of Apuleius.

No less significant of the mental enlargement of the Western world as it hurried to its age of

darkness under the barbarians from beyond its rim is the range of ideas and experience shown in this astonishing novel. It is not known whence Apuleius procured the main theme of his story, the transformation of a man into an ass : it is a mystery, like the tale of the Three Bears in Southey's *Doctor*. There was a nearly contemporary romance on the same subject, attributed (insecurely) to Lucian; but its scope was infinitely less than that of the *Metamorphose*. Nine-tenths of Apuleius' tale is obviously the work of his own mind, using anecdotes, adventures, folklore, dogmas, that he had come across in his vagrom life. Where did he find these peculiar treasures?

Look at the elements of the narrative, which, vague and capricious as it may sometimes seem, is adequately and in some respects admirably put together. Apuleius was riding into Thessaly on family affairs and fell in with two wayfarers, who told him of the ill-repute of all that country for witchcraft. He himself had seen wonders in Athens, like the Indian basket-trick ; but these Thessalians were grimmer necromancers, whose aim was not mirth and solace, but torment and death, as in the terrible tale of the witches who tore a man's heart out and cut his throat, and then stopped the wound with a sponge, which fell out when he stooped over a stream to drink.

His mind filled with these wonders, he went on to the city of Hypata, where he was to experience them in truth ; for here — apart from minor magical happenings to himself and others — he

was entertained by a host whose wife, Pamphiles, was a witch, and whose maid, Fotis, was something now thought even more undesirable. Fotis showed him her mistress changing herself into a bird, and Lucius, rapt, begged her to metamorphose him likewise. Fotis bungled it, and he became an ass.

In this portion of the romance we are in a magic land we know no longer but as children, though it is a more terrible land than even children enter to-day. It is perhaps coeval with humanity. When we meet exactly similar tales in Chaucer—the legend of Arviragus, the story of the Scholar who in a dream saw his fellow murdered—we like to think of them as the last enchantments of the Middle Age. But they are in Apuleius, they are behind the horrible basis of the Greek tragedies, they are in Herodotus, in the Bible and the Apocrypha; they are somewhere not far from the dim primal fears in which the religious sense was first born in neolithic man. They belong by oral lineage to the time to which the memory of man runneth not.

That is one individual feature of the book. Equally notable are the tales called Milesian—*contes drolatiques* of a kind usually confined to oral relation to-day, but immortal nevertheless; Boccaccio and Chaucer were not afraid to write them. These too have “flown living on the lips of men” for countless ages.

And then Apuleius, “poor ass,” as he so often calls himself, enters upon a singular Odyssey,

which contains at once good stories and a picture of the savagery that might be a little way off great Rome's fine roads. As before the Turkish Revolution the Orient Express would rumble to that other world-city, Constantinople, while a few score miles away Albanians and Bulgars and Greeks were carrying on the traditional brigandage and war of centuries, so a little distance from Athens and Corinth there were robbers (looting whole villages), necromancers, dragons, wolves, a bear loose in a house, wandering shepherds, all jumbled in a fantastic world of cruelty, lechery, and rough humour.

In that setting Apuleius puts a parcel of eternal beauty—the story of Cupid and Psyche. Where he obtained it likewise is uncertain ; but he made it veritably his own for all time. With sure art he inserted it into the mouth of an old hag set to watch a beautiful gentlewoman, a captive of thieves. He would have been surprised to learn that it was to chain the imagination of a university as famous as Athens' over seventeen centuries later, and inspire at Oxford a Socialist poet, the most refined of essayists, and a Poet Laureate.

Nor should the superb incongruity of Apuleius' return to human form be denied a share in that eternity. To get back his human form the ass must eat roses, and for that he is enforced to wait till spring (deliciously described) comes back ; and then the humble ungainly beast is miraculously guided to the pomps and processions of the goddess.

Lastly, there is the religious element ; and here too, as in the tale of Cupid and Psyche, Apuleius (but for an unintentionally amusing aside in which he suddenly becomes for a moment the florid, sophistical lawyer) rises above himself. There are passion and eloquence in the invocation of Ceres, beauty in the description of the Festival of the Ship, a certain mystical reverence in his account of the degrees he must pass for the full priesthood ; and these passages, with their fervent identifications of one character among many theogonies, are, moreover, of high value to students of comparative religion.

Through it all plods the patient ass. Not only is he, as a beast-hero, an inspiration ; he is a living character, as Apuleius draws him. He suffers and fears so naturally that you can still see him staggering under blows and burdens, his absurd head drooping, and then his heels kicked up, all awry, at some pleasure or act of revenge. You see his human joy in eating human food, his fear of wolves, his hatred of indecency and dirt : he is a man under his shaggy hide. He wants to blurt out the truth, but can only bray "O" : he betrays his human curiosity by forgetting his grotesque shadow. And yet he is a real animal as well, whom, if in these kindlier days we met him, we should respect and like.

What of his first and best English translator, William Adlington ? Practically nothing is known of him. His translation was published in 1566,

by Henry Wykes, and both this edition and those published in 1571, 1582, 1596 are very scarce. A copy of the first was sold at auction in 1920 for £650. He was at University College, Oxford, in 1566; and he was something of a prig in morals, as his Preface, Dedication and the occasional notes¹ on the events of the story show. He may have been, as Mr Charles Whibley suggests, the author of a moral poem called *A Speciall Remedie against the Force of Lawless Love* (1579). Mr Whibley also points out that he is not really a first-hand translator; he borrows largely from and commits the mistakes of an already existing French version. Even so, he is by way of being an editor as well as a translator, for he seldom allows Apuleius the benefit of his exuberant and novel Latin: he prunes and compresses.

But he wrote magnificent prose, and, consciously or unconsciously, varies his style with his subject-matter. It is instructive to compare his robust English with the highly-wrought, sometimes over-wrought, style of Pater. Here is Adlington in a famous passage:

“ . . . (She) brought forth the lamp, and took the razor. So by her audacity she changed her kind, but when she took the lamp and came to the bedside, she saw the most meek and sweetest beast of all beasts, even

¹ One of them seems to hint that he (or perhaps his father) may have been one of the new Tudor landowners, married to a superstitious fool.

fair Cupid couched fairly, at whose sight the very lamp increased his light for joy, and the razor turned his edge. . . . She saw his hairs of gold, that yielded out a sweet savour . . . his tender plume feathers dispersed upon his shoulders like shining flowers, and trembling hither and thither."

And here are the same sentences from Pater :

"With lamp plucked forth, knife in hand, she put by her sex ; and lo ! as the secrets of the bed became manifest, the sweetest and most gentle of all creatures, Love himself, reclined there, in his own proper loveliness ! At sight of him the very flame of the lamp kindled more gladly ! . . . She sees the locks of that golden head, pleasant with the unction of the gods. . . . The pinions of the winged god, yet fresh with the dew, are spotless upon his shoulders, the delicate plumage wavering over them as they lie at rest."

Pater introduced both that story and Apuleius himself into *Marius the Epicurean*. Marius, who in his different way was as self-conscious and introspective as one of Mr Arnold Bennett's Five Townsmen, may have seen the Apuleius described; but he is no more the Apuleius who became an ass than Pater's tale of Cupid is Adlington's.

Adlington had also a gift for an occasional vivid

phrase which betters the original. Thus "unsure image" is fine English, whereas "incertum simulacrum" is only ordinary Latin. And he preserves words and idioms which ought not to have passed from our tongue: "Maugre her eyes," for instance, is a compact and striking version of words which could really be translated "though it was a sorry sight to her."

And in spite of his moral prepossessions and restraints, I think Adlington, that nebulous, almost invisible, but still surviving ghost, enjoyed himself on this task. It is true that he, no more than Urquhart or, later, Shelton, was concerned with fidelity of translation as a virtue. He expected, too, a certain scholarship of his readers: it was not for him to condescend to the pedantry of calling the god *Risus* by his English name, though in the day of Sir Toby Belch Laughter was a reasonably popular deity. But he lived in an age when men over-ate and over-drunk, and was probably cooped up in a stuffy manor-house, wearing tight, stuffy clothes, and as pleased with his comfort as any Elizabethan squire. He may even have seen such "pomp and processions" as Apuleius described, when Anne Boleyn passed down Cheapside. So when (as rarely) he embroiders his original, he does it in the extravagant Elizabethan manner. Apuleius, living in a land of marble buildings, olive trees, and serene blue stillness, merely said that when ladies of a certain type (like *Fotis*) wish to please, they throw off their cloaks and garments (the *recondite* Latin

words are *lacinias, amicula*). The Elizabethan, of his own mere motion (like the King's Majesty in Council), enumerates and adds to the garments—"partlets, collars, habiliments, fronts, cornets, crespines." I am not to particularise these garments, which as a matter of fact are innocent enough. But I cannot doubt that Adlington had his own ideas about an Elizabethan lady's dress. The words are an epitome of his concentrated bustling age—the age when the new business and farming aristocracy, based on wealth and informed with very material conceptions of life, suddenly became aware of ideals and beauty and romance, as well as of wealth and the law, and translated them all into their own hotly-coloured, wildly-soaring language—a language which was a temper of mind as well as a noble vehicle of thought.

There is one other respect in which Adlington is noticeably of his age, and that is in his spelling. Much of it, like his punctuation, is wildly inconsistent and capricious: a word may appear in two different forms in consecutive lines. Possibly the first printer is to blame for that. But there are certain words frequently used which are practically always spelt consistently: such as—freendes (friends), harde (heard), woordes (words), compaignion (companion), demaund (demand), commaundement (commandment). The habit suggests what philologists have always maintained—that Elizabethan pronunciation was much broader than our own, and would probably be unintelligible to us to-day, or at least as difficult

to follow as an obscure dialect. The spelling of those "woordes" implies something like the country speech of the present time. What the country speech of Elizabeth's age was it is hard to imagine.

As regards the text used in this volume, the first edition of Adlington has been followed, though occasional clearer expressions have been borrowed from later editions, and the Latin has been consulted for the emendation of obscure passages. The spelling has been modernised throughout: I am not one of those who like to keep old orthography because it is "quaint," least of all when it is as inconsistent as in *The Golden Ass*. There is no point in spelling "ten" "tenne," from an antiquarian æstheticism, when the main idea is to make a good story legible. A very few obsolete words have been changed ("next baines" into "nearest baths," for example), a few others retained (for their intrinsic value) with a brief explanation. The eccentric punctuation has been made as nearly modern as is consistent with the rhythm of the sentences; and the often interminable paragraphs have been broken up in places. In certain instances conjunctions—also used capriciously by Adlington, especially "whereby"—have been slightly modified. Adlington's notes have been omitted, except in Book IX, where they have been retained because they show his pedantic point of view very clearly, and in a few other places where

they explain the text. A few short passages and one long one had to be cut out bodily: the "curious" can be trusted to smell them out for themselves in the original English text and, if they please, to search for others in the Latin. The brief life of Apuleius has been omitted, as the main facts are incorporated in this Introduction. I am indebted to the Loeb edition and those edited by Mr Butler and Mr Whibley for light on certain obscurities; but no attempt has been made to make Adlington's version correspond more closely to the Latin text. It is here presented simply as one of the best of stories told in some of the best of English.

F. J. HARVEY DARTON.

POSTSCRIPT.—Since the above Introduction was written and printed I have seen Mr E. B. Osborn's Preface to Adlington's text (John Lane, Ltd.). I find that his Introduction concurs in sense, and sometimes almost verbally, with mine. The coincidence was perhaps inevitable, but it was most certainly accidental, for what I have written was in type and passed for press several months before I even heard of my old friend Mr John Lane's edition. Our aims are different. Mr Lane desires to publish the Adlington translation *in puris naturalibus*. The Navarre Society desires to publish one of the greatest stories in the world in such a version that people with different tastes and a different language may read this splendid tale, first of all as a miraculous novel, and secondly as fine English. Spelling (so it be accurate of its time) does not matter. The story and the rhythm do matter, and they have not been altered materially. For the rest, let philologists hold an inquest; and let ordinary folk be enabled to renew the youth of the world in a language and a spelling they understand, in a book which will last as long as they. They have done so in all the printed editions of the Bible or Shakespeare which (outside the ranks of pure scholarship) people read to-day. Continue the practice.

THE FIRST BOOK OF
LUCIUS APULEIUS OF
THE GOLDEN ASS



SOCRATES AND THE WITCHES



THE FIRST BOOK OF LUCIUS APULEIUS OF THE GOLDEN ASS

*I.—How Apuleius, riding into Thessaly, fell into
company with two strangers, who reasoned
together of the mighty power of witches*

I FORTUNED to take my way into Thessaly about certain affairs which I had to do (for there my ancestry by my mother's side dwells, descended of the line of that most excellent person, Plutarch, and of Sextus the philosopher, his nephew, which is to us a great worship and honour). After by much travel and great pain I had passed over the high mountains and slippery valleys, and had ridden through the cloggy fallowed fields, perceiving that my horse waxed somewhat slow, and to the intent, likewise, that I might repose and strengthen myself (being weary with riding), I alighted from my horse, and wiping away the sweat from every part of his body I unbridled him, and led him gently, to ease him of his weariness. While he went grazing freshly in the field (tossing his head sometimes as a token of rejoicing and gladness) I perceived a little before me two

companions riding, and overtaking them I made the third.

While I listened to hear their communication, one of them laughed and mocked his fellow, saying, "Leave off, I pray thee, and speak no more, for I cannot abide to hear thee tell such absurd and incredible lies." When I heard this, I desired to hear some news, and said, "I pray you, masters, make me partaker of your talk, though I am not so much inquisitive as desirous to know all your communication. We shall shorten our journey, and easily pass this high hill before us, by merry and pleasant talk."

But he who laughed before at his fellow said again, "Verily, this tale is as true as if a man should say that by sorcery and enchantment the floods might be forced to run against their course—the seas to be immovable, the air to lack the blowing of winds, the sun to be restrained from his natural race, the moon to drop her foam upon herbs and trees, to serve for sorceries; the stars to be pulled from heaven, the day to be darkened, and the dark night to hold unbroken."

Then I, being more desirous to hear his talk than his companion's, said, "I pray you, who have but just begun to tell your tale, leave not off so, but tell the residue." And turning to the other I said, "You perhaps are of an obstinate mind and gross ears, and mock and contemn those things which are reported for truth; but know you not that a thing which is accounted untrue by the wild opinion of men, because either is rarely

seen, seldom heard, or passes the capacity of man's reason, will, if it be more narrowly scanned, be found not only evident and plain, but also very easy to be brought to pass?"

*II.—How Apuleius told to the two strangers
what he saw a juggler do in Athens*

"THE other night, being at supper with some hungry fellows, I greedily put a great morsel of meat in my mouth; it was fried with flour of cheese and barley, and cleaved so fast in the passage of my throat, and so stopped my wind, that I was well-nigh choked. And yet at Athens before the porch there, called Pœcile or Painted, I saw with these eyes a juggler swallow up a two-handed sword, with a very keen edge, and by and by, for a little money that we who looked on gave him, he devoured a hunting spear, with the point downward. Then, after he had conveyed the whole spear within his body, and brought it out again behind, there appeared on the top of it (which caused us all to marvel) a fair body, pleasant and nimble, winding and turning himself in such a way that you would suppose that he had neither bone nor gristle, and but was the natural serpent, creeping and sliding on the knotted staff which the God of Medicine bears."

"But," quoth I, turning to him who had begun his tale, "I pray you, follow your purpose, and I at least will give credit to you, and for your pains will pay your charges at the next inn we come to."

“ Certes, sir,” he answered, “ I thank you for your gentle offer, and at your request I will proceed in my tale. But first I will swear to you by the light of this sun shining here, that those things which I shall tell are true, lest, when you come to the next city, of Thessaly, you should doubt anything of that which is rife in the mouths of every person, and done before the face of all men. Now, in order that I may first make relation to you what and who I am, and whither I go, and for what purpose, know ye that I am of Ægina, travelling these countries about from Thessaly to Ætolia, and from Ætolia to Bœotia, to provide for honey, cheese and other victuals to sell again. Understanding that at Hypata (which is the principal city of all Thessaly) new cheeses of exceeding good taste and relish are accustomed to be sold, I fortunèd on a day to go thither to make my market there. But (as it often happens) I came in an evil hour, for one Lupus, a purveyor, had bought and engrossed them all up the day before, and so I was deceived. Wherefore, towards night (being very weary), I went to the baths to refresh myself, and behold, I fortunèd to espy my companion, Socrates, sitting upon the ground, covered with a torn and coarse mantle. But he was so meagre and of so sallow and miserable a countenance, that I scarcely knew him. Fortune had brought him into such estate and calamity that he verily seemed as a common beggar, who stands in the streets to crave the benevolence of the passers-by.

“He was my friend and familiar acquaintance, yet half in despair I drew nigh, and said, ‘Alas, my Socrates! what means this? How fares it with thee? What crime hast thou committed? Verily there is great lamentation and weeping made for thee at home. Thy children are in ward by decree of the provincial judge: thy wife (having ended her mourning time in lamentable wise, with face and visage blubbered with tears, in such sort that she hath well-nigh wept out both her eyes) is constrained by her parents to put out of remembrance the unfortunate loss and lack of thee at home, and (against her will) to take a new husband. And dost thou live here as a ghost or atomy, to our great shame and ignominy?’

“Then answered he to me, and said, ‘O my friend Aristomenus, now perceive I well that you are ignorant of the whirling changes, the unstable forces and slippery inconstancy of fortune.’

“Therewithal he covered his face (even then blushing for very shame) with his rugged mantle, so that he appeared half naked. Then I (not wishing to see him any longer in such great misery and calamity) took him by the hand and lifted him up from the ground: but he (having his face still covered) cried, ‘Let Fortune triumph yet more, let her have her sway, and finish that which she hath begun.’

“Therewithal I put off one of my own garments and covered him, and took him to the baths, and caused him to be anointed, and wiped, and made clean. Then (although I was very

weary myself) I led the poor wretch to my inn, where he reposed his body upon a bed, while I brought him meat and drink, and so we talked together : for there we might be merry and laugh at our pleasure, and so we were, until such time as he (fetching a pitiful sigh from the bottom of his heart, and beating his face in misery) began his tale."

III.—How Socrates, in his return from Macedonia to Larissa, was spoiled and robbed, and how he fell acquainted with one Meroe, a witch

"**A**LAS, poor wretch that I am ! Only through desire to see a game of trial of weapons I am fallen into these miseries and wretched snares of misfortune. For as I returned from Macedonia, where I sold all my wares, and played the merchant for ten months, a little before I came to Larissa, I turned out of the road to view the situation of the country there, and behold, in the bottom of a deep valley, I was suddenly surrounded by a company of thieves, who robbed and spoiled me of such things as I had, and would hardly suffer me to escape. But in the end I was happily delivered from their cruel hands, and I fortunèd to come to the house of a woman that sold wine, called Meroe, old, but pleasant enough in converse. To her I opened the causes of my long and careful travel, and of my unlucky adventure ; and after I had declared unto her such things as came to my remembrance,

she gently entertained me, and made me good cheer. By and by she brought me to her own bed-chamber, where I (poor wretch) purchased for myself this miserable slavery, and for lodging I gave her such apparel as the thieves had left to cover me withal, until at length this dame and evil fortune brought me to this parlous case.'

"Then I (understanding the cause of his miserable state) said to him, 'In faith thou art worthy to sustain the most extreme misery and calamity, since thou hast defiled thine own body, forsaken thy wife traitorously, and dishonoured thy children, parents and friends for the love of a vile old strumpet.'

"When Socrates heard me rail against Meroe thus, he held up his finger to me, and, half abashed, said, 'Peace, peace, I pray you, and' (looking about lest any person should hear) 'I pray you' (quoth he) 'take heed what you say against so venerable a woman as she is, lest by your intemperate tongue you catch some harm.'

"Then (as if in wonder), 'What' (quoth I), 'is she so excellent a person as you name her to be? I pray you tell me.'

"Then answered he, 'Verily she is a magician, who has power to rule the heavens, to bring down the sky, to bear up the earth, to turn the waters into hills, and the hills into running waters, to lift up the terrestrial spirits into the air, and to pull the gods out of the heavens, to extinguish the planets, and to lighten the deep darkness of hell.'

"Then said I to Socrates, 'I pray thee leave this high and mystical kind of talk, and tell the matter in a more plain and simple fashion.'

"Then answered he, 'Will you hear one or two, or more of the acts she has done? She enforces not only the inhabitants of the country here, but also the Indians and the Æthiops, and the Antipodeans themselves,¹ to love her in most ragingly sort. Yet these are but trifles and chips of her occupation. I pray you give ear, and I will declare greater matters which she has done openly and before the face of all men.'"

*IV.—How Meroe the witch turned divers persons
into miserable beasts*

"IN faith, Aristomenus, to tell you the truth, this woman had a certain lover, whom by the utterance of one word only she turned into a beaver, because he loved another woman. She changed one of her neighbours, an old man who sold wine, into a frog, because he was one of her own trade, and therefore she bare him a grudge; and now the poor wretch, swimming in one of his pipes of wine, and well-nigh drowned in the dregs, doth cry and call

¹ The received text says Antichthones, and so, virtually, does Apuleius. Later translators make it Antipodeans. It is possible that the real reading is Autochthones—"the very natives of her own country"—since it may be doubted if Apuleius knew much of the Antipodes, or Adlington much more. The word is a curious problem in all the three tongues—Greek, Latin and English—and difficult to reconcile with popular knowledge.—ED.

with a hoarse voice for his old guests and acquaintance that pass by. Likewise she turned one of the advocates of the court (because he pleaded and spake against her in a rightful cause) into a horned ram, and now the poor ram is become an advocate.

“Moreover, she caused that the wife of a certain lover that she had should never be delivered of her child, which when it was known abroad and published throughout all the town, they took indignation against her, and ordained that the next day she should most cruelly be stoned to death. But this purpose of theirs she prevented by virtue of her enchantments, and as Medea, who obtained of King Creon but one day’s respite before her departure, burned all his house, him and his daughter, so she (by her conjurations and invocations of spirits, which she useth in a certain hole in her house, as she herself declared to me the next day following) closed all the persons of the town so sure in their houses, and with such violence of power, that for the space of two days they could not come forth, nor open their gates nor doors, nor break down their walls; whereby they were forced by mutual consent to cry to her, and to bind themselves strictly by oaths that they would never afterwards molest or hurt her, and moreover, if any offered her any injury, they would be ready to defend her; whereupon she (moved at their promises, and stirred by pity) released all the town. But she conveyed the principal author

of this ordinance, about midnight, with all his house, the walls, the ground, and the foundation into another town, distant from thence a hundred miles, situate on the top of a high hill, and by reason thereof destitute of water ; and because the edifices and houses were built so nigh together that it was not possible for the house to stand there, she threw it down before the gate of the town.'

"Then spake I and said, 'O my friend Socrates, you have declared unto me many marvellous things and strange chances, and, moreover, stricken me with no small trouble of mind, yea, rather with great fear, lest the same old woman, using the like practice, should fortune to hear all our communication : wherefore let us now sleep, and after we have taken our rest let us rise betime in the morning and ride away from hence before day, as far as we may.'"

*V.—How Socrates and Aristomenus slept together in
one chamber, and how they were handled
by witches*

"IN speaking these words, and devising with myself of our departing the next morrow, lest Meroe the witch should play by us as she had done by divers other persons, it fortun'd that Socrates fell asleep, and slept very soundly, by reason of his travel and the plenty of meat and wine wherewithal he had filled himself. Wherefore I closed and barred fast the doors of the

chamber, and put my bed behind the door, and so laid me down to rest. But I could in no wise sleep, for the great fear which was in my heart, until it was about midnight, and then I began to slumber. But alas! behold suddenly the chamber doors brake open, the locks, bolts and posts fell down, so that you would verily have thought some thieves had come to have spoiled and robbed us. My bed whereon I lay being a truckle bed, fashioned in form of a cradle, with one of the feet broken and rotten, by violence was turned upside down, and I likewise was overwhelmed and covered, lying in the same.

“Then perceived I in myself that certain states of the mind may by nature chance to have contrary effects. For as tears oftentimes trickle down the cheeks of one who sees or hears some joyful news, so I, being in this fearful perplexity, could not forbear laughing to see how I was made like a snail in his shell.

“While I lay on the ground covered thus, I peeped under the bed to see what would happen. And behold, there entered in two old women, the one bearing a burning torch, and the other a sponge and a naked sword. In this habit they stood about Socrates, who lay fast asleep. Then she which bore the sword said to the other, ‘Behold, sister Panthia, this is my dear and my sweetheart, who both day and night hath abused my wanton youthfulness. This is he who, little regarding my love, not only defames me with reproachful words, but also intends to run away :

And I shall be forsaken by like craft as Ulysses did use, and shall continually bewail my solitariness as Calypso did.'

"Which said, she pointed towards me, who lay under the bed, and showed me to Panthia. 'This is he' (quoth she) 'who is his counsellor, and persuades him to forsake me, and now (being at the point of death) he lies prostrate on the ground covered with his bed, and has seen all our doings, and hopes to escape scot-free from my hands : but I will cause that he shall repent himself too late of his former intemperate language, and his present curiosity.'

"When I heard these words I fell into a cold sweat, and my heart trembled with fear, so much that the bed over me did likewise rattle and shake.

"Then spake Panthia to Meroe, and said, 'Sister, let us by and by tear him in pieces.'

"But Meroe¹ (being so named because she was a taverner and loved well good wine) answered, 'Nay, rather let him live, and bury the corpse of this poor wretch in some hole of the earth.' Therewithal she turned the head of Socrates on the other side, and thrust her sword up to the hilt into the left part of his neck, and received the blood that gushed out with a \pot, so that no drop thereof fell beside ; which things I saw with my own eyes.

"Then (as I think) to the intent she might alter nothing that pertained to the sacrifice which

¹ Meroe, so called of Merum, which in English is strong wine untempered.—ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

she was wont to make, she thrust her hand down into the entrails of his body, and (searching about) at length brought forth the heart of my miserable companion, Socrates, who (having his throat cut thus) yielded out a doleful cry, and gave up the ghost.

"Then Panthia stopped the wide wound of his throat with the sponge, and said, 'O sponge, sprung and made of the sea, beware that thou pass not by the running river.'

"When this was ended, they went their ways, and the doors closed fast, the posts stood in their old places, and the locks and bolts were shut again. But I, lying upon the ground like one without soul, yet reviving myself, and appointed as I thought for the gallows, began to say, 'Alas, what shall become of me to-morrow when my companion shall be found murdered here in the chamber? To whom shall I seem to tell any similitude of truth when I tell the truth indeed? They will say, "If thou wert unable to resist the violence of the women, yet shouldst thou have cried for help. Wilt thou suffer the man to be slain before thy face and say nothing? Or why did not they slay thee likewise? Why did they spare thee who stood by and saw them commit that horrible act? Although thou hast escaped their hands, yet thou shalt not escape ours."' "

"While I pondered these things with myself the night passed on, and I thought best to take my horse before day and go forward on my journey. Howbeit, the ways were unknown to

me, and when I took up my packet, and unlocked and unbarred the doors, those good and faithful doors which in the night did open of their own accord could then scarcely be opened with their keys. And when I was out I cried, 'Ho, sirrah, ostler, where art thou? Open the stable door, for I will ride away at once!'

"The ostler lay behind the stable door upon a pallet, and was half asleep. 'What' (quoth he)! 'do not you know that the ways are very dangerous? What mean you to rise at this time of night? If you, being perhaps guilty of some heinous crime, be weary of your life, yet think not that we are such fools that we will die for you.'

"Then said I, 'It is well-nigh day, and moreover, what can thieves take from him that hath nothing? Dost not thou know (fool as thou art) that if thou be naked, if ten giants should assail thee, they could not spoil or rob thee?'

"Whereunto the drowsy ostler, half asleep, and turning on the other side, answered, 'What know I whether you have murdered your companion whom you brought in yesternight, or no, and now seek the means to escape away.'

"O Lord, at that time, I remember the earth seemed to open, and I saw at hell-gate the dog Cerberus gaping to devour me, and then I verily believed that Meroe did not spare my throat through pity, but rather cruelly pardoned me to bring me to the gallows. Wherefore I returned to my chamber, and there devised with myself in what sort I should finish my life. But I saw that

fortune would minister to me no other instrument than that which my bed proffered me, and I said, 'O bed, O bed, most dear to me at this present, which hast abode and suffered with me so many miseries, judge and arbiter of such things as were done here this night, whom only I may call to witness for my innocence, render to me some wholesome weapon to end my life, since I am most willing to die.'

"Therewithal I pulled out a piece of the rope wherewith the bed was corded, and tied one end thereof about a rafter by the window, and with the other end I made a sliding knot, and stood upon my bed, and so put my neck into it. But when I leaped from the bed, thinking to strangle myself and so die, behold, the rope, being old and rotten, broke in the middle, and I fell down, tumbling upon Socrates who lay below.

"Even at that same very time the ostler came in, crying with a loud voice, and said, 'Where are you that made such haste at midnight, and now lie wallowing abed?' Whereupon (I know not whether it was by my fall or by the great cry of the ostler) Socrates (as if waking out of sleep) rose up and said, 'It is not without cause that strangers speak evil of ostlers, for this caitiff, with his coming in and his crying out, I think under colour to steal away something, hath waked me out of a sound sleep.'

"Then I rose up joyful, with a merry countenance, saying, 'Behold, good ostler, my friend, my companion and my brother, whom thou

didst falsely affirm to be murdered by me this night.' And therewithal I embraced my friend Socrates and kissed him, and took him by the hand and said, 'Why tarry we? Why lose we the pleasure of this fair morning? Let us go.'

"So I took up my packet, and paid the charges of the house and departed. We had not gone a mile out of the town before it was broad day, and then I diligently looked upon Socrates' throat to see if I could espy the place where Meroe thrust in her sword. But when I could not perceive any such thing, and I thought within myself, 'What a madman am I, who (being overcome with wine yesternight) have dreamed such terrible things. Behold, I see Socrates is sound, safe and in health; where is his wound? where is the sponge? where is his great and new cut?' And then I spake to him and said, 'Verily it is not without occasion that physicians of experience affirm that such as fill their gorges abundantly with meat and drink shall dream of dire and horrible sights; for I myself (not tempering my appetite yesternight from the pots of wine) did seem to see this night strange and cruel visions, that even yet I think myself sprinkled and wet with human blood.'

"Whereunto Socrates, laughing, made answer and said, 'Verily I myself dreamed this night that my throat was cut, and that I felt the pain of the wound, and that my heart was pulled out of my belly. The remembrance thereof makes me fear even now, for my knees do tremble so that I can

go no farther, and therefore I would fain eat somewhat to strengthen and revive my spirits.'

"Then said I, 'Behold, here is thy breakfast,' and therewithal I opened my scrip, that hung upon my shoulder, and gave him bread and cheese, and we sat down under a great plane tree, and I ate part with him. While I beheld him eating greedily I perceived that he waxed meagre and pale, and that his lively colour faded away, insomuch that (being in great fear and remembering those terrible furies of whom I lately dreamed) the first morsel of bread that I put in my mouth (which was but very small) did so stick in my jaws that I could neither swallow it down nor yet yield it up. The small time of our being together increased my fear, and what is he who, seeing his companion die in the highway before his face, will not greatly lament and be sorry?

"When Socrates had eaten sufficiently, he waxed very thirsty, for indeed he had well-nigh devoured all a whole cheese. By evil fortune, there was behind the plane tree a pleasant running water, as clear as crystal, and I said to him, 'Come hither, Socrates, to this water and drink thy fill.'

"Then he rose and came to the river, and kneeled down upon the side of the bank to drink; but he had scarce touched the water with his lips when behold, the wound of his throat opened wide and the sponge suddenly fell into the water; and after it issued out a little remnant of blood,

and his body (being then without life) had fallen into the river, had not I caught him by the leg, and so pulled him up.

“After that I had lamented a good space the death of my wretched companion, I buried him in the sands there by the river. Which done, in great fear I rode through many outways and desert places, and, as if culpable of the death of Socrates, I forsook my country, my wife and my children, and came to Ætolia, where I married another wife.”

This tale Aristomenus told, and his fellow, who before obstinately would give no credit to him, began to say, “Verily there was never so foolish a tale, nor a more absurd lie told than this.” Then he spake to me, saying, “Ho, sir, what you are I know not, but your habit and countenance declare that you should be some honest gentleman; do you believe his tale?”

“Yea, verily” (quoth I). “Why not? for whatsoever the fates have appointed to men, that I believe shall happen. Many things chance to me, and to you, and to divers others, which being declared to the ignorant be accounted as lies. But verily I give credit to his tale, and render entire thanks to him in that (by the pleasant relation thereof) we have quickly passed and shortened our journey, and I think that my horse also was delighted with the same, and has brought me to the gate of this city without any pain at all.”

Thus ended both our talk and journey, for

they two turned on the left-hand to the next villages, and I rode into the city.

*VI.—How Apuleius came to a city called Hypata,
and was lodged in one Milo's house, and
brought him letters from Demeas of
Corinth*

AFTER those two companions were departed, I entered into the city, where I espied an old woman, of whom I inquired whether that city was called Hypata, or no. She answered "Yes." Then I demanded whether she knew one Milo, an alderman of the city; whereat she laughed, and said, "Verily it is not without cause that Milo is called an alderman, and accounted as chief of those who dwell without the walls of the city."

"I pray thee, good mother," I replied, "do not mock, but tell me what manner of man he is, and where he dwells."

"Marry" (quoth she), "do not you see those bay windows which on the one side abut on the gate of the city, and on the other side to the next lane? There Milo dwells, very rich in money and substance, but by reason of his great avarice and insatiable covetousness, evil spoken of. He is a man who lives all by usury, and by lending his money upon pledges. Moreover, he dwells in a small house, and is ever counting his money, and has a wife that is a companion of his extreme misery; neither keeps he any more in his house

than one maid only, who goes apparelled like a beggar, or less."

I laughed with myself, and thought, "In faith my friend Demeas has served me well, in sending me (being a stranger) to such a man, in whose house I shall not be afraid either of smoke or of the scent of meat." Therewithal I rode to the door, which was fast barred, and knocked aloud.

There came forth a maid, who said, "Ho, sirrah, you who knock so fast, in what kind of sort will you borrow money? Know you not that we use to take no gage unless it be either plate or jewels?"

I answered, "I pray thee, maid, speak more gentle, and tell me whether thy master be within or no."

"Yes" (quoth she), "that he is; why do you ask?"

"Marry," said I, "I am come from Corinth, and have brought him letters from Demeas his friend."

Then said the maid, "I pray you tarry here till I tell him so." Therewithal she closed fast the doors and went in, and after a while she returned again, and said, "My master desires you to alight and come in."

I found him sitting upon a little bed, going to supper, and his wife sat at his feet. But there was no meat upon the table. I saluted him and delivered the letters which I brought from Demeas: which when he had read, he said, "Verily I thank my friend Demeas much, in that

he hath sent to me so worthy a guest as you are." Therewithal he commanded his wife to sit away, and bid me sit in her place, which when I refused, by reason of courtesy, he pulled me by the garment and willed me to sit down, "for we have" (quoth he) "no other stool here, nor no other great store of household stuff, for fear of robbing."

Then I (according to his commandment) sat down, and he fell in further communication with me, and said, "Verily I do conjecture by the comely feature of your body, and by the modest shamefastness of your face, that you are a gentleman born, as my friend Demeas has no less declared in his letters. Wherefore I pray you take in good part our poor lodging. Behold, yonder chamber is at your commandment; use it as your own, and if you be contented therewithal, you shall resemble and follow the virtuous qualities of your good father, Theseus, who disdained not the slender and poor cottage of Hecale." And then he called his maid, who was named Fotis, and said, "Carry this gentleman's packet into the chamber, and lay it up safely, and bring quickly water to wash him, and a towel to rub him, and other things necessary: and then bring him to the nearest baths, for I know that he is very weary of travel."

When I heard these things, I partly perceived the manners of Milo, and (endeavouring to bring myself further in his favour) I said, "Sir, there is no need of any of these things, for they have been everywhere ministered to me by the

way. I will go to the baths, but my chiefest care is that my horse be well looked to, for he brought me hither roundly, and therefore I pray thee, Fotis, take this money and buy some hay and oats for him."

*VII.—How Apuleius, going to buy fish, met with
his companion Pythias*

WHEN this was done, and all my things brought into the chamber, I walked towards the baths, but first I went to the market to buy some victuals for my supper. I saw great plenty of fish set out to be sold: and so I cheapened part thereof, and that which they first held at a hundred pence I bought at length for twenty.

When I had done this, and was departing away, one of my old companions, and fellow at Athens, named Pythias, fortunèd to pass by, and viewing me a good space, in the end brought me to his remembrance, and gently came and kissed me, saying, "O my dear friend Lucius, it is a great while past since we two saw each other, and moreover, from the time that we departed from our master Vestius, I never heard any news of you. I pray you, Lucius, tell me the cause of your peregrination hither."

Then I answered and said, "I will make relation thereof to you to-morrow: but I pray you tell me, what mean these servitors that follow you, and these rods or virges which they bear, and this habit which you wear, like a magistrate's?

Verily I think that you have obtained your own desire, whereof I am right glad."

Then answered Pythias, "I bear the office and rule of the Clerk of the Market, and therefore if you will have any pittance for your supper, speak, and I will purvey it for you."

I thanked him heartily, and said I had bought meat sufficient already.

But Pythias, when he espied my basket wherein my fish was, took it and shook it, and demanded of me what I paid for all my sprats. "In faith" (quoth I), "I could scarce force the fishmonger to sell them for twenty pence."

When he heard this, he brought me back again into the market, and inquired of me of whom I bought them. I showed him the old man who sat in a corner, and (by reason of his office) he did greatly blame him, and said, "Is it thus that you serve and handle strangers, and specially our friends? Wherefore sell you this fish so dear which is not worth a halfpenny? Now perceive I well that you are an occasion to make this place, which is the principal city of all Thessaly, to be forsaken of all men, and to reduce it to an uninhabitable desert, by reason of your excessive prices of victuals. But assure yourself that you shall not escape without punishment, and you shall know what my office is, and how I ought to punish such as offend."

Then he took my basket and cast the fish on the ground, and commanded one of his sergeants to tread them under his feet. This done, he

persuaded me to depart, and said that only that shame and reproach done to the old caitiff sufficed him. So I went away all amazed and astonished towards the baths, considering with myself, and devising of the grace of my companion Pythias.

When I had washed and refreshed my body, I returned again to Milo's house, without both money and meat, and so got into my chamber. Then came Fotis immediately to me, and said that her master desired me to come to supper ; but I (not ignorant of Milo's abstinence) prayed that I might be pardoned, since I thought best to ease my weary bones rather with sleep and quietness than with meat.

When Fotis had told this to Milo, he came himself and took me by the hand, and while I modestly excused myself, "I will not" (quoth he) "depart from this place until such time as you go with me." To confirm this he bound his words with an oath, whereby he enforced me to follow him, and so he brought me into his chamber, where he sat him down upon the bed, and demanded of me how his friend Demeas did, his wife, his children and all his family : and I made him answer to every question. Specially he inquired the causes of my peregrination and travel, which when I had declared, he yet busily demanded of the state of my country, and of the chief magistrates there, and principally of our Lieutenant and Viceroy. But when he perceived that I was wearied not only by travel,

but also with talk, and that I fell asleep in the midst of my tale, and further that I spake nothing directly or advisedly, he suffered me to depart to my chamber.

So escaped I at length from the prattling and hungry supper of this rank old man, and being compelled by sleep and not by meat (as having supped only with talk), I returned into my chamber, and there betook me to my quiet and long-desired rest.

Here ends the First Book of Lucius Apuleius





THE SECOND BOOK OF
LUCIUS APULEIUS OF
THE GOLDEN ASS



THE SECOND BOOK OF LUCIUS APULEIUS OF THE GOLDEN ASS

*VIII.—How Apuleius fortun'd to meet with his
cousin Byrrhena*

AS soon as night was passed, and the day began to spring, I fortun'd to awake, and rose out of my bed as half amazed. I was very desirous to know and see some marvellous and strange things, remembering within myself that I was in the midst part of all Thessaly, where, by the common report of all the world, sorceries and enchantments are most used. I oftentimes repeated within myself the tale of my companion Aristomenus, touching the manner of this city, and (being moved by great desire) I viewed the whole situation thereof. There was nothing which I saw there that I believed to be the same which it was indeed. Everything seemed to me to be transformed and altered into other shapes by the wicked power of sorcery and enchantment, insomuch that I thought that the stones which I found were indurate and turned from men into that figure, and that the birds which I heard chirping, and the trees without the walls of the

city, and the running waters, were changed from men into such kind of likenesses. And further, I thought that the statues, images and walls could go, and the oxen and other brute beasts could speak and tell strange news, and that immediately I should see and hear some oracle from the heaven, and from the gleed of the sun.

Thus, being astonished or rather dismayed and vexed with desire, knowing no certain place whither I intended to go, I went from street to street, and at length (as I curiously gazed on everything) I fortunèd unwares to come into the market-place, where I espied a certain woman accompanied with a great many servants, towards whom I drew nigh, and viewed her garments beset with gold and precious stones, in such sort that she seemed to be some noble matron.

There was an old man who followed her, who (as soon as he had espied me) said to himself, "Verily, this is Lucius." Then he came and embraced me, and by and by he went to his mistress, and whispered in her ear, and came to me again, saying, "How is it, Lucius, that you will not salute your dear cousin and singular friend?"

I answered, "Sir, I dare not be so bold as to take acquaintance of an unknown woman." Howbeit, as half ashamed I drew towards her; and she turned herself and said, "Behold how he resembles the very same grace as his mother, Salvia! Behold his countenance and stature agreeing thereto in each point! Behold his

comely state, his fine slenderness, his vermilion colour, his hair yellow by nature, his grey and quick eyes like the eagle's, and his trim and comely gait, which sufficiently prove him to be the natural child of Salvia." And moreover, she said, "O Lucius, I have nourished thee with my own proper hands, and why not? For I am not only of kindred to thy mother by blood, but also by nurture, for we both descended of the line of Plutarch, lay in one belly, sucked the same paps, and were brought up together in one house. And further, there is no other difference between us two, but that she is married more honourably than I. I am the same Byrrhena whom you have often heard named amongst your friends at home. Wherefore I pray you to take the pains to come with me to my house, and use it as your own."

At these words I was partly abashed, and said, "God forbid, cousin, that I should forsake my host Milo without any just and reasonable cause, but verily I will (as often as I have occasion to pass by your house) come and see how you do."

While we went talking thus together, by little and little we came to her house, and behold the gate of the same very beautifully set with pillars quadrangle-wise, on the top whereof were placed carved statues and images, but principally the goddess of Victory, so lively and with such excellence portrayed and set forth that you would verily have thought that she had flown, and hovered with her wings hither and thither. On the

contrary part, the image of the goddess Diana was wrought in white marble, which was a marvellous sight to see, for she seemed as though the wind blew up her garments, and that she encountered with them that came into the house. On each side of her were dogs made of stone, that seemed to menace with their fiery eyes, their pricked ears, their bended nostrils, and their grinning teeth, that you would have thought they had bayed and barked. Moreover (which was a greater marvel to behold), the excellent carver and deviser of this work had fashioned the dogs to stand up fiercely with their fore feet, and their hind feet on the ground, ready to fight. Behind the back of the goddess was carved a stone in manner of a cavern, environed with moss, herbs, leaves, sprigs, green branches and boughs, growing in and about the same, insomuch that within the stone it glistened and shone marvellously. Under the brim of the stone hung apples and grapes carved finely; wherein Art (envying Nature) showed his great cunning, for they were so lively set out that you would have thought (if summer had been come) they might have been pulled and eaten, and while I beheld the running water, which seemed to spring and leap under the feet of the goddess, I marked the grapes which hung in the water, which were like in every point to the grapes of the vine, and seemed to move and stir by violence of the stream. Moreover, amongst the branches of the stone appeared the image of Actæon, and how Diana (which was carved

within the same stone standing in the water), because he did see her naked, turned him into a hart, and so he was torn and slain by his own hounds.

While I was greatly delighted with the view of these things, Byrrhena spoke to me and said, "Cousin, all things here are at your commandment." Therewithal she willed secretly the residue to depart, and when they were gone she said, "My most dear cousin, Lucius, I swear by this goddess Diana that I do greatly tender your safety, and am as careful for you as if you were my own natural child. Beware, I say, beware of the evil arts and wicked allurements of that Pamphiles, who is the wife of Milo, whom you call your host. She is accounted the most chief and principal magician and enchantress living. By breathing out certain words and charms over boughs, stones and other frivolous things she can throw down all the powers of the heavens into the deep bottom of hell, and reduce all the whole world again to the old chaos. As soon as she espies any comely young man, she is forthwith stricken with love for him, and presently sets her whole mind and affection on him. She sows her seed of flattery, she invades his spirit, and entangles him with continual snares of unmeasurable love. And then, if any accord not to her filthy desire, or if they seem loathsome in her eye, by and by in the moment of an hour she turns them either into stones, sheep, or some other beast as she herself pleases, and some she presently slays

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and murders. Of her I would you should earnestly beware. For she burns continually, and you, by reason of your tender age and comely beauty, are capable of her fire and love."

This with great care Byrrhena gave me in charge ; but I (who always coveted and desired, after I heard talk of such sorcery and witchcraft, to be experienced in the same) little esteemed to beware of Pamphiles, but willingly determined to bestow my money in learning of that art, and now wholly to become a witch. So I waxed joyful, and wringing myself out of her company, as out of links or chains, I bade her farewell, and departed towards the house of my host, Milo. By the way I reasoned thus with myself : " O Lucius, now take heed, be vigilant, have a good care, for now thou hast time and place to satisfy thy desire ; now shake off thy childishness and show thyself a man. Specially temper thyself from the love of thine hostess, but hardily attempt to win the maiden Fotis, for she is beautiful, wanton, and pleasant in talk. And soon when thou goest to sleep, and when she brings thee gently into thy chamber, and tenderly layeth thee down in thy bed, and lovingly covereth thee, and kisseth thee sweetly, and departeth unwillingly, and casteth her eyes oftentimes back, and stands still, then haste thou a good occasion ministered unto thee, to prove and try the mind of Fotis."

While I thus reasoned with myself, I came to Milo's door, persevering still in my purpose, but I found neither Milo nor his wife at home.



FOTIS

IX.—How Apuleius fell in love with Fotis

WHEN I was within the house I found my dear and sweet love, Fotis, mincing meat, and making pottage for her master and mistress. The cupboard was all set with wines, and I thought I smelled the savour of some dainty meats. She had about her middle a white and clean apron, and she was girded about her body under her breast with a swathe of red silk, and she stirred the pot and turned the meat with her fair and white hands in such sort that it was in my mind a comely sight to see.

These things when I saw I was half amazed, and stood musing with myself, and my courage came then upon me, which before was scant. And I spoke to Fotis plainly, and said, “O Fotis, how trimly you can stir the pot, and how finely you can make pottage. O happy and twice happy is he to whom you give leave and licence but to touch you.”

Then she being likewise wittily disposed answered, “Depart, I say, wretch, from me, depart from my fire, for if the flame thereof do never so little blaze forth, it will burn thee extremely: and none can extinguish the heat thereof but I alone.”

When she had said these words she cast her eyes upon me and laughed; but I did not depart from thence until such time as I had viewed her in every point: but what should I speak of

others? I do accustom abroad to mark and view the face and hair of every dame, and afterwards delight myself therewith privately at home, and thereby judge the residue of their shape, because the face is the principal part of all the body, and is first open to our eyes, and whatsoever flourishing and gorgeous apparel doth work and set forth in the corporal parts of a woman, the same doth the natural and comely beauty set out in the face. Moreover, there are some who (to the intent to show their grace and feature) will cast off their partlets, collars, habiliments, fronts, cornets and crespines, and delight more to show the fairness of their skin than to deck themselves up in gold and precious stones. But because it is a crime to me to say so, and to give no example thereof, know ye that if you spoil and cut off the hair of any woman or deprive her of the colour of her face, though she were never so excellent in beauty, though she were thrown down from heaven, sprung of the seas, nourished of the floods, though she were Venus herself, though she were accompanied with the Graces, though she were waited upon of all the court of Cupid, though she were girded with her beautiful scarf of love, and though she smelled of perfumes and musks, yet if she appeared bald, she could in no wise please, no, not her own Vulcan.

O how well doth a fair colour and a shining face agree with glittering hair! Behold, it encounters with the beams of the sun, and pleases the eye marvellously. Sometimes the beauty of the hair

resembles the colour of gold and honey, sometimes the blue plume and azure feathers about the necks of doves, especially when it is either anointed with the gum of Arabia, or trimly tufted out with the teeth of a fine comb ; if it be tied up in the nape of the neck, it seems to the lover who beholds it as a glass yielding forth a more pleasant and gracious comeliness than if it were sparsed abroad on the shoulders of the woman or hung down scattering behind. Finally, there is such a dignity in the hair, that whatsoever she be, though she be never so bravely attired with gold, silks, precious stones, and other rich and gorgeous ornaments, yet if her hair be not curiously set forth, she cannot seem fair.

But in my Fotis, her garments unbraced and unlaced did increase her beauty. Her hair hung about her shoulders, and was dispersed abroad upon her partlet, and on every part of her neck, howbeit the greater part was trussed up in her nape with a lace. Then I, unable to withstand the broiling heat which I was in, ran upon her and kissed the place where she had thus laid her hair ; whereat she turned her face, and cast her rolling eyes upon me, saying, " O scholar, thou hast tasted now both honey and gall ; take heed that thy pleasure do not turn into repentance."

" Tush " (quoth I), " my sweetheart, I am contented, for such another kiss, to be broiled here upon this fire." Wherewithal I embraced and kissed her more often, and she embraced and kissed me likewise. Her breath smelled like

cinnamon, and the liquor of her tongue was like sweet nectar. Wherewith when my mind was greatly delighted, I said, "Behold, Fotis, I am yours, and shall presently die, unless you take pity upon me." Which when I had said, she eftsoons kissed me and bid me be of good courage, and, "I will" (quoth she) "satisfy your whole desire, and it shall be no longer delayed than until night. Wherefore go your ways and prepare yourself."

Thus when we had lovingly talked and reasoned together, we departed for that time.

*X.—How Byrrhena sent victuals to Apuleius, and
how he talked with Milo of Diophanes*

WHEN noon was come Byrrhena sent me a fat pig, five hens and a flagon of old wine. Then I called Fotis and said, "Behold how Bacchus the egger and stirrer of love offers himself of his own accord. Let us therefore drink up this wine, that we may prepare ourselves."

The residue of the day I passed away at the baths, and in banqueting, and towards evening I went to supper, for I was bid by Milo, and so I sat down at the table, out of Pamphiles' sight as much as I could, being mindful of the commandment of Byrrhena. Sometimes I would cast my eyes upon her, as if I should look upon the furies of hell, but eftsoons turning my face behind me, and beholding my Fotis ministering at the table, I was again refreshed, and made merry.

When Pamphiles saw the candle standing on the table, she said, "Verily we shall have much rain to-morrow."

When her husband heard this, he demanded of her by what reason she knew it. "Marry" (quoth she), "the light on the table shows it." Then Milo laughed and said, "Verily we nourish and bring up a Sibylline prophetess, which by the view of a candle can divine of celestial things and of the sun itself."

Then I mused in my mind and said to Milo, "Of truth it is a good experience and proof of divination, neither is it any marvel, for although this light is but a small light and made by the hands of man, yet it has a remembrance of that great and heavenly light, as of his parent, and shows unto us what will happen in the skies above. I knew at Corinth a certain man of Assyria, who would give answers in every part of the city, and for money would tell every man his fortune. To some he would tell the days of their marriages: to others he would tell when they should build, that their edifices should continue: to others, when they should best go about their affairs: to others, when they should travel by land: to others, when they should go by sea: and to me (purposing to take my journey hither) he declared many things strange and variable. For sometimes he said that I should win glory enough, sometimes he said I should write a great history, sometimes again he said that I should devise an incredible tale, and sometimes that I should make books."

At this Milo laughed again, and inquired of me of what stature this man of Assyria was, and what he was named. "In faith" (quoth I), "he is a tall man, and somewhat black, and he is called Diophanes."

Then said Milo, "The same is he, and no other, who has declared many things here unto us, whereby he got and obtained great substance and treasure. But the poor wretch fell at length into the hands of unpitiful and cruel fortune. For when he was on a certain day amongst a great assembly of people, to tell the simple sort their fortune, a cobbler came to him, and desired him to tell when it should be best for him to take a journey which he had promised to do. The cobbler opened his purse and counted a hundred pence to pay him for his pains, whereupon came a certain young gentleman, and took Diophanes by the garment. Then he, turning himself, embraced and kissed him, and desired the gentleman (who was one of his acquaintance) to sit down by him. And Diophanes, astonished with this sudden chance, forgot what he was doing, and said, 'O dear friend, you are heartily welcome; I pray you, when arrived you in these parts?' Then answered he, 'I will tell you soon, but, brother, I pray you to tell me of your coming from the Isle of Euboea, and how you sped by the way.' Whereunto Diophanes (this notable Assyrian, not yet come to his mind, but half amazed) gave answer and said, 'I would to God that all our enemies and evil-willers might fall into

the like dangerous peregrination and trouble, for the ship we were in (after it was, by the waves of the seas, and by the great tempests, tossed hither and thither, in great peril, and after the mast and stern broke likewise in pieces) could in no wise be brought to the shore, but sunk into the water, and so we swam and hardly escaped to land : and after that, what was given to us in recompense of our losses, either by the pity of strangers or by the benevolence of our friends, was taken away from us by thieves, and when my brother Arisuatus did essay to resist their violence, he was cruelly murdered by them before my face.' When Diophanes had sadly declared this, the cobbler took up his money again, which he had counted out to pay for the telling of his fortune, and ran away. Then Diophanes, coming to himself, perceived what he had done, and we all that stood by laughed greatly. But that " (quoth Milo) " which Diophanes did tell to you, Lucius, that you should be happy and have a prosperous journey, was only true."

Thus Milo reasoned with me, but I was not a little sorry in that I had trained him in such a vein of talk, and that I had lost a good part of the night, and the sweet pleasure thereof. But at length I boldly said to Milo, " Let Diophanes farewell, with his evil fortune, and get again that which he lost by sea and land, for I verily do still feel the weariness of my travel, wherefore I pray you pardon me, and give me licence to depart to bed."

Then I rose up and went to my chamber, where I found all things finely prepared. The table was all covered with such meats as were left at supper, the cups were filled half full with water to temper and allay the wines, the flagon stood ready prepared. And when I was entering the bed, behold, my Fotis came in and gave me roses and flowers, which she had in her apron, and some she threw about the bed, and she kissed me sweetly, and tied a garland about my head, and bespread the chamber with the residue. Then she took up a cup of wine, and allayed it with hot water, and proffered it me to drink; and before I had drunk up all, she pulled it from my mouth, and then gave it me again, and in this manner we emptied the pot twice or thrice together. Thus when I had well replenished myself with wine, she came to me to bed, and embraced me sweetly, and so we passed all the night in pastime and pleasure. In which sort we pleasantly passed away many other nights following.

*XI.—How Apuleius supped with Byrrhena, and
what a strange tale Bellephoron
told at the table*

IT fortun'd on a day that Byrrhena desired me earnestly to sup with her, and she would in no wise take any excuse. Whereupon I went to Fotis to ask counsel of her, as of some divine, who (although she was unwilling that I should depart one foot from her company), yet

at length she gave me licence to be absent for a while, saying, "Beware that you tarry not long at supper there, for there is a rabblement of common rioters and disturbers of the public peace that rove about in the streets, and murder all such as they may take, neither can law nor justice redress them in any case. And they will the sooner set upon you, by reason of your comeliness and audacity, in that you are not afraid at any time to walk in the streets."

Then I answered and said, "Have no care of me, Fotis, for I esteem the pleasure which I have with thee above the dainty meats that I eat abroad, and therefore I will return again quickly. Nevertheless I mind not to come without company, for I have here my sword, whereby I hope to defend myself."

So I went to supper, and behold, I found at Byrrhena's house a great company of strangers, and of the chief and principal of the city. The beds (made of citron and ivory) were richly adorned and spread with cloth-of-gold; the cups were garnished preciousy, and there were divers other things of sundry fashion, but of like estimation and price. Here stood a glass gorgeously wrought, there stood another of crystal finely painted, there stood a cup of glittering silver, and here another of shining gold, and here was another of amber artificially carved, and made with precious stones. Finally, there were all things that might be desired. The servitors waited orderly at the table in rich apparel. The pages,

arrayed in silk robes, filled great gems and pearls, made in the form of cups, with excellent wine.

Then one brought in candles and torches : and when we were set down and placed in order, we began to talk, to laugh and be merry. Byrrhena spoke to me, and said, " I pray you, cousin, how like you our country ? Verily I think there is no other city which has the like temples, baths and other commodities as we have here. Further, we have abundance of household stuff, we have pleasure, we have ease, and when the Roman merchants arrive in this city, they are gently and quietly entertained, and all that dwell within this province, when they purpose to solace and repose themselves, come to this city."

Whereunto I answered, " Verily " (quoth I) " you tell truth, for I can find no place in all the world which I like better than this. But I greatly fear the blind and inevitable subterfuges of witchcraft, for they say that the dead bodies are digged out of their graves, and the bones of them that are burned are stolen away, and the toes and fingers of such as are slain are cut off to afflict and torment such as live. The old witches, as soon as they hear of the death of any person, forthwith go and uncover the hearse, and spoil the corpse, to work their enchantments."

Then another sitting at the table spoke and said, " In faith you say true, neither yet do they spare or favour the living. For I know one not far hence that was cruelly handled by them, who

(being not contented with cutting off his nose) did likewise cut off his ears."

At this all the company laughed heartily, and looked upon one that sat at the board's end, who, being amazed at their gazing, and somewhat angry withal, would have risen from the table, had not Byrrhena spoke to him and said, " I pray thee, friend Bellephoron, sit still, and according to thy accustomed courtesy, declare to us the loss of thy nose and ears, to the end that my cousin Lucius may be delighted with the pleasantness of the tale."

He answered, " Ah, dame, you in the office of your bounty shall prevail herein, but the insolence of some is not to be supported." This he spoke very angrily, but Byrrhena was earnest upon him, and assured him that he should have no wrong at any man's hand, whereby he was persuaded to declare the tale. Lapping up the end of the couch-coverings into a heap, he leaned with his elbow thereon, and held out the three forefingers of his right hand in the manner of an orator, and said :

" When I was a young man I went to a certain city called Miletus, to see the games and triumphs there called Olympian, and being desirous to come into this famous province, after I had travelled over all Thessaly, I fortun'd in an evil hour to come to the city Larissa, where (while I went up and down to view the streets, to seek some relief for my poor estate, for I had spent all my money) I espied a tall old man standing upon a stone, in the midst of the market-place, crying with a loud voice, and saying that if any man

would watch a dead corpse that night, he should be reasonably rewarded for his pains. When I heard this, I said to one that passed by, 'What is here to do? Do dead men run away in this country?' Then answered he, 'Hold your peace, for you are but a babe and a stranger here, and (not without cause) you are ignorant how you are in Thessaly, where the women witches do bite off by morsels the flesh of the faces of dead men, and thereby work their sorceries and enchantments.' 'Then' (quoth I) 'in good fellowship tell me the order of this custody, and how it is.' 'Marry' (quoth he), 'first you must watch all the night, with your eyes bent continually upon the corpse, never looking off nor moving aside. For these witches turn themselves into sundry kinds of beasts, whereby they deceive the eyes of all men. Sometimes they are transformed into birds, sometimes into dogs or mice, and sometimes into flies. Moreover, they will charm the keepers of the corpse asleep; neither can it be declared what means and shifts these wicked women use to bring their purpose to pass. And the reward for such dangerous watching is no more than four or six shillings. But hearken further, which I had well-nigh forgotten, if the keeper of the dead body do not render, on the morning following, the corpse whole and sound as he received the same, he shall be punished in this sort—if the corpse be diminished or spoiled in any part of his face, hands or toes, the same shall be diminished and spoiled in the keeper.'

“When I heard this, I took a good heart and went to the crier, and bid him cease, for I would take the matter in hand ; and I demanded what I should have. ‘Marry’ (quoth he), ‘a thousand pence, but beware, I say, young man, that you do well defend the dead corpse from the wicked witches, for he was the son of one of the chiefest of the city.’ ‘Tush’ (said I), ‘you speak you cannot tell what. Behold, I am a man made all of iron, and have never desire to sleep, and am more quick of sight than lynx or Argus.’

“I had scarce spoken these words, when he took me by the hand and brought me to a certain house, the gate whereof was closed fast, so that I went through the wicket. Then he brought me into a chamber somewhat dark, and showed me a matron clothed in mourning vesture and weeping in lamentable wise. He spoke to her and said, ‘Behold, here is one that will enterprise to watch the corpse of your husband this night.’ Which when she heard, she turned her blubbered face, covered with her hair, to me, saying, ‘I pray you, young man, take good heed, and see well to your office.’ ‘Have no care’ (quoth I), ‘so long as you will give me something suitable above that which is due to be given.’

“With this she was contented. She rose and brought me into a chamber where the corpse lay covered with white sheets, and she called seven witnesses, before whom she showed the dead body, and every part and parcel thereof, and (with weeping eyes) desired them all to testify

the matter. Then she said these words, 'Behold, his nose is whole, his eyes safe, his ears without scar, his lips untouched and his chin sound.' All of this was written and noted in tables, and subscribed with the hands of the witnesses to confirm the same; which done, I said to the matron, 'Madam, I pray you that I may have all things here necessary.' 'What is that?' quoth she. 'Marry,' said I, 'a great lamp replenished with oil, pots of wine, and water to allay the same, and some other drink and dainty dish that was left at supper.'

"But she shook her head, and said, 'Away, fool as thou art! Thinkest thou to play the glutton here and to look for dainty meats, where so long time there hath not been seen any smoke at all? Comest thou hither to eat, where we should weep and lament?'

"Therewithal she turned and commanded her maiden, Myrrhena, to deliver me a lamp with oil, which when she had done, they closed the chamber door and departed.

"When I was alone I rubbed my eyes, and armed myself to keep the corpse, and to the intent I might not sleep, I began to sing, and so I passed the time till it was midnight, when, behold, there crept a weasel into the chamber, and came against me and put me in very great fear, insomuch that I marvelled greatly of the audacity of so little a beast. But I said, 'Get thee hence, and hie thee to thy fellows, lest thou feel my fingers? Why wilt not thou go?'

“Incontinently she ran away, and when she was gone I fell on the ground so fast asleep that Apollo himself could not discern which of us two was the dead corpse, for I lay prostrate, as one without life, and needed a keeper likewise.

“At length the cocks began to crow, declaring that it was day, wherewithal I waked and (being greatly afraid) ran to the dead body with the lamp in my hand, and viewed him round about. Immediately came in the matron, weeping, with her witnesses, and ran to the corpse, and kissing him, turned his body and found no part diminished. Then she commanded one Philodespotus, her steward, to pay me my wages forthwith, which when he had done, he said, ‘We thank you, gentle young man, for your pains, and verily, for your diligence herein, we will account you as one of the family.’ Whereunto I (being joyous of my unhopéd gain, and rattling my money in my hand) answered, ‘I pray you, madame, esteem me as one of your servitors, and if you need my service at any time I am at your commandment.’

“I had not fully declared these words when, behold, all the servants of the house were assembled with weapons to drive me away. One buffeted me about the face, another about the shoulders, some struck me in the sides, some kicked me, and some tore my garments, and so I was handled amongst them and driven from the house as the proud young man Adonis who was torn by a boar.

“When I was come into the next street, I mused with myself and remembered my unwise and unadvised words, whereby I considered that I had deserved much more punishment, and that I was worthily beaten for my folly. By and by the corpse came forth and (because it was the body of one of the chief of the city) it was carried in funeral pomp round about the market-place, according to the rite of the country there. And forthwith stepped out an old man weeping and lamenting, and ran to the bier and embraced it, and with deep sighs and sobs cried out in this sort, ‘O masters, I pray you by the faith which you profess, and by the duty which you owe to the public weal, take pity and mercy upon this dead corpse, who is miserably murdered, and do vengeance on that wicked and cursed woman his wife, who has committed this act. For it is she, and no other, who has poisoned her husband, my sister’s son, to get his heritage.’

“In this sort the old man complained before the face of all the people. Then they (astonished at these sayings, and because the thing seemed to be true) cried out, ‘Burn her, burn her,’ and they sought for stones to throw at her, and bade the boys in the street to do the same. But she (weeping in lamentable wise) swore by all the gods that she was not culpable of this crime.

“‘No’ (quoth the old man)? ‘Behold, here is one sent by the providence of God to try out the matter, even Zachlas an Egyptian, who is the most principal prophet in all this country, and

who was hired of me for money to restore the soul of this man from hell, and to revive his body for the trial hereof.'

"Therewithal he brought forth a certain young man clothed in linen raiment, having on his feet a pair of pantouffles, with his crown shaven. The old man kissed his hands and knees, saying, 'O priest, have mercy, have mercy, I pray thee by the celestial planets, by the powers infernal, by the virtue of the natural elements, by the silences of the night, by the buildings of swallows nigh to the Coptic town, by the increase of the flood of Nilus, by the secret mysteries of Memphis, and by the instruments and trumpets of the Isle Pharos, have mercy, I say, and call again to life this dead body, and make that his eyes, which be closed and shut, may be opened and see! Howbeit, we mean not to strive against the law of death, neither intend we to deprive the earth of his right, but (to the end this act may be known) we crave but a small time and space of life.'

"At this the prophet was moved, and took a certain herb and laid it three times upon the mouth of the dead, and he took another and laid it upon his breast in like sort. When he had done this, he turned himself to the East, and made certain orisons to the sun, which caused all the people to marvel greatly, and to look for the strange miracle that should happen.

"I pressed in amongst them, nigh to the bier, and got upon a stone to see this mystery, and

behold, incontinently the dead body began to receive spirit, his principal veins moved, his life came again, and he held up his head, and spoke in this sort, 'Why do you call me back again to this transitory life, that have already tasted of the water of Lethe, and likewise been in the deadly den of Styx? Leave off I pray, leave off, and let me lie in quiet rest.'

"When these words were uttered by the dead corpse, the prophet drew nigh to the bier, and said, 'I charge thee to tell (before the face of all the people here) the occasion of thy death. What! dost thou think that I cannot by my conjurations call up the dead, and by my puissance torment thy body?'

"Then the corpse moved up his head again, and made reverence to the people, and said, 'Verily I was poisoned by the means of my wicked wife, and so thereby yielded my bed to an adulterer.'

"But his wife, taking present audacity, and reproving his sayings with a cursed mind, denied it. The people were bent against her in sundry ways. Some thought best that she should be buried alive with her husband, but some said that there ought no credit to be given to the dead body. But this opinion was clean taken away by the words that the corpse spoke again, and said, 'Behold, I will give you some evident token, which never yet any other man knew, whereby you shall perceive that I declare the truth.' And he pointed towards me, who stood on the stone,

and said, 'When this, the good guardian of my body, watched me diligently in the night, and the wicked witches and enchantresses came into the chamber to spoil me of my limbs and, to bring their purposes to pass, transformed themselves into the shape of beasts, and when they could in no wise deceive or beguile his vigilant eyes, they cast him into so dead and sound a sleep that by their witchcraft he seemed without spirit or life. After this they called me by my name, and did never cease till the cold members of my body began by little and little to revive. Then he (being of more lively soul, howbeit buried in sleep), in that he and I were named by one name, and because he knew not that they called me, rose up first, and as one without sense passed by the door fast closed to a certain hole, where the witches cut off first his nose and then his ears, and so that was done to him which was appointed to be done to me. And that their subtlety might not be perceived, they made him a like pair of ears and nose of wax ; and you may see that the poor wretch, for lucre of a little money, sustained loss of his members.'

"When he had said this, I was greatly astonished, and (minding to prove whether his words were true or no) put my hand to my nose, and my nose fell off, and I put my hand to my ears, and my ears fell off. Whereat all the people wondered greatly, and laughed me to scorn ; but I (being stricken in a cold sweat) crept between their legs for shame, and escaped away. So I, disfigured,

returned home again, and covered the loss of my ears with my long hair, and glued this clout to my face to hide my shame."

As soon as Bellephoron had told his tale they who sat at the table (replenished with wine) laughed heartily. And while they drank one to another, Byrrhena spoke to me, and said, "From the first foundation of this city, we have had a custom to celebrate the festival day of the god Risus, and to-morrow is the feast, when I pray you to be present to set out the same more honourably. I would with all my heart that you could find or devise somewhat of yourself, that might be in honour of so great a god."

I answered, "Verily, cousin, I will do as you command me, and right glad would I be if I might invent any laughing or merry matter to please or satisfy Risus withal."

Then I rose from the table, and took leave of Byrrhena and departed, and when I came into the first street my torch went out, so that I could scarce get home, by reason it was so dark, and for fear of stumbling.

When I was well-nigh come to the door I saw three men of great stature heaving and lifting at Milo's gates to get in. And when they saw me they were nothing afraid, but essayed with more force to break down the doors, whereby they gave me occasion (and not without cause) to think that they were strong thieves. Whereupon I drew out my sword, which I carried under my cloak, and ran in amongst them, and wounded

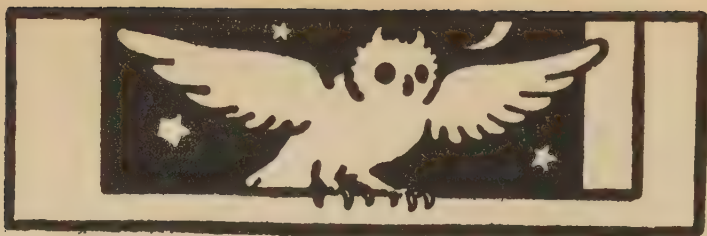
them in such sort that they fell down dead before my face. Thus when I had slain them all, I knocked, sweating and breathing at the door, till Fotis let me in. And then full weary with the slaughter of these thieves, like Hercules when he fought against King Gerion, I went to my chamber and laid me down to sleep.

Here ends the Second Book of Lucius Apuleius





THE THIRD BOOK OF
LUCIUS APULEIUS OF
THE GOLDEN ASS



THE THIRD BOOK OF LUCIUS APULEIUS OF THE GOLDEN ASS

*XII.—How Apuleius was taken and put in
prison for murder*

WHEN morning was come, and I was awaked from sleep, my heart burned sore, with remembrance of the murder which I had committed the night before; and I rose and sat down on the side of the bed, with my legs across, and wringing my hands, weeping miserably. I imagined that I was brought before the judge in the judgement place, and that he awarded sentence against me, and that the hangman was ready to lead me to the gallows. And further, I imagined, and said, "Alas! what judge is he that is so gentle or benign as to think that I am unguilty of the slaughter and murder of these three men? Howbeit, the Assyrian Diophanes did firmly assure me that my peregrination and voyage hither should be prosperous."

But while I did thus unfold my sorrows, and greatly bewail my fortune, behold, I heard a great noise and cry at the door, and in came the magistrates and officers, who commanded

two sergeants to bind me, and lead me to prison.

I was willingly obedient, and as they led me through the street all the city gathered together and followed me, and although I looked always on the ground for very shame, yet sometimes I turned my head aside, and marvelled greatly that amongst so many thousand people there was not one but laughed exceedingly. Finally, when they had brought me through all the streets of the city, in the manner of those who go in procession, and do sacrifice to mitigate the ire of the gods, they placed me in the judgement hall, before the seat of the judges. After the crier had commanded all men to keep silence, the people desired the judges to give sentence in the great theatre, by reason of the great multitude that was there, whereby they were in danger of stifling. The press of people increased still. Some climbed to the top of the house, some got upon the beams, some upon the images, and some thrust in their heads through the windows, little regarding the dangers they were in, so long as they might see me.

Then the officers brought me forth openly into the middle of the hall that every man might behold me. And after the crier had made an "Oyez," and desired that all such as would bring any evidence against me should come forth, there stepped out an old man, with a glass of water in his hand, dropping out softly, who desired that he might have liberty to speak during the time of

the continuance of the water ; and when this was granted he began his oration in this sort :

*XIII.—How Apuleius was accused by an old man,
and how he answered for himself*

“ **O** MOST reverend and just judges, the thing which I purpose to declare unto you is no small matter, but touches the estate and tranquillity of this whole city, and the punishment thereof may be a right good example to others. Wherefore I pray you, most venerable fathers, to whom and to every of whom it doth appertain to provide for the dignity and safety of the common weal, that you will in no wise suffer this wicked homicide, imbrued with the blood of so many murdered citizens, to escape unpunished. And think you not that I am moved hereunto by envy or hatred, but by reason of my office, in that I am captain of the night watch ; and in order that no man alive should accuse me to be remiss, I will declare all the whole matter, orderly, as it was done this last night. This night past, when at our accustomed hour I diligently searched every part of the city, I fortunèd to espy this cruel young man, drawing out his sword against three citizens, and after a long combat fought between them, he murdered one after another miserably ; which when he had done (moved in his conscience at so great a crime) he ran away, and aided by reason of darkness, slipped into a house and there lay hidden all night. But by the

providence of the gods, which suffers no heinous offences to remain unpunished, he was taken by us this morning before he escaped any farther, and so brought hither to your honourable presence to receive his desert accordingly. So have you here a guilty person, a culpable homicide, and an accused stranger. Wherefore pronounce you judgement against this man, being an alien, as you would most severely and sharply revenge such an offence found in a known citizen."

In this sort the cruel accuser finished and ended his terrible tale. Then the crier commanded me to speak, if I had anything to say for myself, but I could in no wise utter any word at all, for weeping. And on the other side I esteemed not so much his rigorous accusation, as I did consider my own miserable conscience. Howbeit (being inspired by divine audacity) at length I spoke. "Verily, I know that it is a hard thing for him, who is accused to have slain three persons, to persuade you that he is not innocent, although he should declare the whole truth and confess how the matter was indeed. But if your Honours will vouchsafe to give me audience, I will show you that if I be condemned to die, I have not deserved it by my own desert, but because I was moved by fortune and reasonable cause to do that act. Returning somewhat late from supper yesternight (being well tippled with wine, which I will not deny) and approaching nigh to my common lodging, which was in the house of one Milo, a

citizen of this city, I fortunèd to espy three great thieves attempting to break down his walls and gates, and to open the locks to enter in. When they had removed the doors out of the hooks, they consulted amongst themselves how they would handle such as they found in the house. One of them, being of more courage and of greater stature than the rest, spoke to his fellows, and said, 'Tush, you are but boys. Take men's hearts unto you, and let us enter into every part of the house, and such as we find asleep let us slay, and such likewise as resist let us kill, and so by that means we shall escape without danger.' Verily, ye judges, I confess that I drew out my sword against those three citizens, but I thought that it was the office and duty of one that bears goodwill to this public weal so to do, especially since they put me in great fear, and essayed to rob and spoil my host, Milo. But when those cruel and terrible men would in no case run away, nor fear my naked sword, but boldly resisted against me, I ran upon them and fought valiantly. One of them, the captain, invaded me strongly, and drew me by the hair with both his hands, and began to beat me with a great stone, but in the end I proved the hardier man, and threw him down at my feet and killed him. I took likewise the second, who clasped about my legs and bit me, and slew him also. And the third, who came running violently against me, after I had struck him under the stomach, fell down dead. When I had thus delivered myself, the house, my host

and all his family from this present danger I thought that I should not only escape unpunished, but also have some great reward from the city for my pains. Moreover, since I have always been clear and unspotted of crime, and have esteemed my innocence above all the treasure of the world, I can find no reasonable cause why upon my accusation I should be condemned to die : since first, I was moved to set upon the thieves by just occasion ; secondly, because there is none that can affirm that there has been at any time either grudge or hatred between us ; thirdly, we were mere strangers and of no acquaintance ; and last of all, no man can prove that I committed that act for any lucre or gain."

When I had ended my words in this sort, I wept again piteously, and holding up my hands I prayed all the people by the mercy of the common weal, and for the love of my poor infants and children, to show me some pity and favour. And when I saw their hearts somewhat relented and moved by my lamentable tears, I called all the gods to witness that I was unguilty of the crime, and so to their divine providence I committed my present estate.

But turning myself, I perceived that all the people laughed exceedingly, and especially my good friend and host, Milo. Then thought I with myself, "Alas ! where is faith ? Where is remorse of conscience ? Behold, I am condemned to die as a murderer, for the safeguard of my host Milo and his family. Yet is he not contented

with that, but likewise laughs me to scorn, where otherwise he should comfort and help me."

*XIV.—How Apuleius was accused by two women,
and how the slain bodies were found blown
bladders*

WHEN this was done, out came a woman weeping into the middle of the theatre, arrayed in mourning vesture, and bearing a child in her arms. And after her came an old woman in ragged robes, crying and howling likewise. And they brought with them the olive boughs wherewith the three slain bodies were covered on the bier, and cried out in this manner, "O right judges, we pray you, by the justice and humanity which is in you, to have mercy upon these slain persons, and succour our loss of our dear husbands, and especially this poor infant, who is now an orphan and deprived of all good fortune. Execute your justice by order and law upon the blood of this thief who is the occasion of all our sorrows."

When they had spoken these words, one of the most aged judges rose, and said, "Touching this murder, which deserves great punishment, this malefactor himself cannot deny but that our duty is to inquire and try out whether he had no co-adjutors to help him. It is not likely that one man alone could kill three such great and valiant persons. Therefore the truth must be tried out by the rack, and so we shall learn what other

companions he has, and root out the nest of these mischievous murderers."

There was no long delay, for according to the custom of Greece, the fire, the wheel, and many other torments were brought in. Then my sorrow increased, or rather doubled, in that I could not end my life with whole and unperished members. And by and by the old woman, who troubled all the court with her howling, desired the judges that (before I should be tormented on the rack) I might uncover the bodies which I had slain, that every man might see their comely shape and youthful beauty, and that I might receive condign and worthy punishment, according to the quality of the offence; and therewithal she made a sign of joy.

Then the judge commanded me forthwith to discover the bodies of the slain, lying upon the bier, with my own hands. But when I refused a good space, by reason I would not make my act apparent to the eyes of all men, the sergeants charged me by commandment of the judges, and thrust me forward to do the same. I then (being enforced by necessity, though it were against my will) uncovered their bodies.

But, O good Lord, what a strange sight did I see! What a monster! What sudden change of all my sorrows! I seemed as though I were one of the house of Proserpina and of the family of death, insomuch that I could not sufficiently express the form of this new sight, so far was I amazed and astonished thereat. The bodies of the

three slain men were no bodies, but three blown bladders mangled in divers places, and they seemed to be wounded in those parts where I remember I wounded the thieves the night before. Thereat the people laughed exceedingly. Some rejoiced marvellously with the remembrance thereof; some held their stomachs, that ached with joy, but every man delighted at this passing sport, and so departed out of the theatre.

But I from the time that I uncovered the bodies stood still as cold as ice, no otherwise than as the other statues and images there, neither came I to my right senses until such time as Milo, my host, came and took me by the hand, and with civil violence led me away, weeping and sobbing, whether I would or no: and because that I might not be seen, he brought me through many blind ways and lanes to his house, where he went about to comfort me (being sad and yet fearful), with gentle entreaty of talk. But he could in no wise mitigate my impatience of the injury which I conceived within my mind.

And behold, by and by the magistrates and judges, with their ensigns, entered into the house, and endeavoured to pacify me in this sort, saying, "O Lucius, we are advertised of your dignity, and know the genealogy of your ancient lineage, for the nobility of your kin possess the greatest part of all this province. Think not that you have suffered the thing wherefore you weep, to your reproach or ignominy, but put away all care and sorrow out of your mind. For this day,

which we celebrate once a year in honour of the god Risus, is always renowned by some solemn new show, and the god continually accompanies the inventor thereof, and will not suffer that he should be sorrowful, but pleasantly bear a joyful face. And verily all the city, for the grace that is in you, intend to reward you with great honours, and to write you down as a patron, and further, that your statue or image shall be set up for a perpetual remembrance."

I answered, "As for such benefits as I have received already of this famous city of Thessaly, I yield and render most entire thanks, but as touching the setting up of any statues or images, I would wish that they should be reserved for my ancestors and such as are more worthy than I."

When I had spoken these words somewhat gravely, and showed myself more merry than I was before, the judges and magistrates departed, and I reverently took my leave of them and bid them farewell. And behold, there came one running to me in haste, and said, "Sir, your cousin Byrrhena desires you to take the pains, according to your promise yesternight, to come to supper, for it is ready."

But I, greatly fearing to go any more to her house in the night, said to the messenger, "My friend, I pray you to tell my cousin, your mistress, that I would willingly be at her commandment, but for breaking my troth and credit. For my host, Milo, enforced me to assure him, and compelled me by the feast of this present day, that I

should not depart from his company, wherefore I pray you to excuse me and to defer my promise to another time."

While I was speaking these words, Milo took me by the hand and led me towards the nearest baths, but by the way I went couching under him, to hide myself from the sight of men, because I had ministered such an occasion of laughter.

When I had washed and wiped myself and returned home again, I never remembered any such thing, so greatly was I ashamed at the nodding and pointing of every person. Then I went to supper with Milo, where, God wot, we fared but poorly. Wherefore (feigning that my head did ache by reason of my sobbing and weeping all the day) I desired licence to depart to my chamber ; and so I went to bed.

*XV.—How Fotis told Apuleius what witchcraft
her mistress used*

WHEN I was abed I began to call to mind all the sorrows and griefs that I was in the day before, until such time as my love Fotis came into the chamber, not as she was wont to do, for she seemed nothing pleasant either in countenance or talk, but with a sour face and frowning look. She began to speak in this sort, " Verily, I confess that I have been the occasion of all thy trouble this day."

Therewithal she pulled out a whip from under her apron, and delivered it to me, saying,

“Revenge thyself of me, or rather slay me. And think you not that I willingly procured this anguish and sorrow to you, I call the gods to witness. I had rather suffer my own body to be punished than that you should receive or sustain any harm by my means. That which I did was by the commandment of another, and wrought (as I thought) for some other ; but behold, the unlucky chance fortunèd on you by my evil occasion.”

I, very curious and desirous to know the matter, answered, “In faith” (quoth I), “this most pestilent and evil-favoured whip (which thou hast brought to scourge thee withal) shall first be broken in a thousand pieces, than that it should touch or hurt thy delicate and dainty skin. But I pray you tell me, how have you been the cause and means of my trouble and sorrow? For I dare swear by the love that I bear to you (and I will not be persuaded, though you yourself should endeavour the same) that ever you went about to trouble or harm me. Perhaps sometimes you imagined an evil thought in your mind, which afterwards you revoked ; but that is not to be deemed as a crime.”

When I had spoken these words, I perceived by Fotis’ eyes being wet with tears, and well-nigh closed up, that she had a desire to pleasure, and specially because she embraced and kissed me sweetly. And when she was somewhat restored to joy, she desired me that she might first shut the chamber door, lest by the intemperance

of her tongue in uttering any unfitting words there might grow further inconvenience. Where-withal she barred and propped the door and came to me again, and embracing me lovingly about the neck with both her arms, spoke with a soft voice and said, "I do greatly fear to discover the privities of this house, and to utter the secret mysteries of my dame. But I have a confidence in you and in your wisdom, by reason that you are come of so noble a line and endued with so profound sapience, and are further instructed in so many holy and divine things, so that you will faithfully keep silence, and whatsoever I shall reveal or declare unto you, you would close within the bottom of your heart, and never discover the same : for I assure the love that I bear to you enforces me to utter it. Now shall you know all the estate of our house, now shall you know the hidden secrets of my mistress, whom the powers of hell do obey, and by whom the celestial planets are troubled, the gods made weak, and the elements subdued ; neither is the violence of her art in more strength and force than when she espies some comely young man who pleases her fancy, as oftentimes it happens. For now she loves one Bæotian, a fair and beautiful person, on whom she employs all her sorcery and enchantment ; and I heard her say with my own ears yesternight that (if the sun had not then gone down, and the night come to minister convenient time to work her magical enticements) she would have brought perpetual darkness over

all the world herself. You shall know that when she saw yesternight this Bæotian sitting at the barber's, when she came from the baths, she secretly commanded me to gather some of the hair of his head, which lay dispersed upon the ground, and to bring it home: which when I thought to have done, the barber espied me, and by reason it was bruited throughout all the city that we were witches and enchantresses, he cried out, and said, 'Will you never leave off stealing of young men's hairs? In faith, I assure you unless you cease your wicked sorceries I will complain to the justices.'

"With that he came angrily towards me, and took away the hair which I had gathered out of my apron, which grieved me very much, for I knew my mistress' manners, that she would not be contented, but beat me cruelly. Wherefore I intended to run away, but the remembrance of you put always that thought out of my mind, and so I came homeward very sorrowfully; but because I would not seem to come in my mistress' sight with empty hands, I saw a man shearing blown goat skins, and the hair that he had shorn off was yellow, and much resembled the hair of the Bæotian.

"I took a good deal thereof and, colouring the matter, brought it to my mistress. When night came, before your return from supper, she (to bring her purpose to pass) went up to a high gallery of her house, opening to the east part of the world, and preparing herself according to her

accustomed practice, she gathered together all her substance for fumigations. She brought forth plates of metal carved with strange characters, she prepared the bones of such as were drowned by tempest in the seas, she made ready the members of dead men, as their nostrils and fingers. She set out the lumps of flesh of such as were hanged, the blood which she had reserved of such as were slain, and the jaw-bones and teeth of wild beasts. Then she said certain charms over the hair, and dipped it in divers waters, as in well water, cows' milk, mountain honey, and other liquor, which when she had done she tied and lapped it up together, and with many perfumes and smells threw it into a hot fire to burn.

“Then by the great force of this sorcery, and the violence of so many confections, those bodies (whose hair was burning in the fire) received human shape, and felt, heard, and walked, and (smelling the scent of their own hair) came and rapped at our doors instead of Bæotius. Then you, being well tippled, and deceived by the obscurity of the night, drew out your sword courageously, like furious Ajax, and killed, not as he did, the whole herd of beasts, but three blown skins.”

When I was thus pleasantly mocked and taunted by Fotis, I said to her, “Verily, now may I for this achieved enterprise be numbered as Hercules, who by his valiant prowess performed the twelve notable labours, as Gerion with three

bodies, and as Cerberus with three heads, for I have slain three blown goat skins. But to the end that I may pardon thee of that which thou hast committed, perform the thing which I shall most earnestly desire of thee—that is, bring me that I may see and behold when thy mistress goes about any sorcery or enchantment, and when she prays to the gods, for I am very desirous to learn that art, and as it seems to me, thou thyself hast some experience in the same. For this I know and plainly feel that (whereas I have always irked and loathed the embracings and love of matrons) I am so stricken and subdued with thy shining eyes, ruddy cheeks, glittering hair, and lily-white bosom, that I neither have mind to go home, nor to depart hence, but esteem the pleasure which I shall have with thee above all the joys of the world.”

Then quoth she, “O my Lucius, how willing would I be to fulfil your desire, but by reason she is so hated, she gets herself into solitary places and out of the presence of every person when she minds to work her enchantment. Howbeit, I regard more to gratify your request than I esteem the danger of my life, and when I see opportunity and time I will assuredly bring you word, so that you shall see all her enchantment, but always upon this condition, that you secretly keep close such things as are done.”

So she came to bed, and we passed the night in pastime and dalliance, till by drowsy sleep I was constrained to lie still.

*XVI.—How Fotis brought Apuleius to see her
mistress enchant*

ON a day Fotis came running to me in great fear and said that her mistress (to work her sorceries on such as she loved) intended, the night following, to transform herself into a bird, and to fly whither she pleased, wherefore she willed me privily to prepare myself to see the same. And when midnight came she led me softly into a high chamber, and bid me look through the chink of a door.

First I saw how Pamphiles put off all her garments, and took out of a certain coffer sundry kinds of boxes, of which she opened one and tempered the ointment therein with her fingers, and then rubbed her body therewith from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head. When she had spoken privily with herself, having the candle in her hand, she shook her body, and behold, I perceived a plume of feathers did burgeon out ; her nose waxed crooked and hard, her nails turned into claws, and so she became an owl. Then she cried and screeched like a bird of that kind, and willing to prove her force, moved herself from the ground by little and little, till at last she flew quite away.

Thus by her sorcery she transformed her body into what shape she would. Which when I saw I was greatly astonished, and although I was enchanted by no kind of charm, yet I thought that

I seemed not to have the likeness of Lucius, for so was I banished from my senses, amazed in madness, and so I dreamed waking, that I felt my eyes to know whether I were asleep or no.

But when I was come again to myself, I took Fotis by the hand, and moved it to my face, and said, "I pray thee, while occasion serve, that I may have the fruition of the fruits of my desire, and grant me some of this ointment. O Fotis, I pray thee, make that in the great flames of my love I may be turned into a bird, so will I ever hereafter be bound to you and obedient to your commandment."

Then said Fotis, "Will you go about to deceive me now, and enforce me to work my own sorrow? Are you in that mind that you will not tarry in Thessaly? If you be a bird, where shall I seek you, and when shall I see you?"

Then answered I, "God forbid that I should commit such a crime; for though I could fly into the air as an eagle, or though I were the messenger of Jupiter, yet would I have recourse to nest with thee. And I swear, by the knot of thy amiable hair, that since the time that I first loved thee, I never fancied any other person. Moreover, this cometh to my mind, that if by virtue of the ointment I shall become an owl, I will take heed that I come nigh no man's house. I am not to learn how these matrons would handle their lovers if they knew that they were transformed into owls. Moreover, when they are taken in any place, owls are nailed upon posts, and so they are worthily

rewarded, because it is thought that they bring evil fortune to the house. But I pray you (which I had almost forgotten) tell me by what means, when I am an owl, I shall return to my pristine shape and become Lucius again ? ”

“ Fear not ” (quoth she), “ for my mistress has taught me the way to bring that to pass ; neither think you that she did it for any goodwill or favour, but to the end I might help her, and minister some remedy when she returns home. Consider, I pray you, with yourself, with what frivolous trifles so marvellous a thing is wrought ; for, by Hercules, I swear I give her nothing else, save a little dill and laurel leaves in well water, which she drinks and washes herself withal.”

When she had spoken this she went into the chamber and took a box out of the coffer, which I first kissed and embraced, and prayed that I might have good success in my purpose. And then I put off all my garments and greedily thrust my hand into the box, and took out a good deal of ointment and rubbed myself withal.

XVII.—How Apuleius, thinking to be turned into a bird, was turned into an ass, and how he was led away by thieves

AFTER I had well rubbed every part and member of my body, I hovered with my arms, and moved myself, looking still to be changed into a bird, as Pamphiles was. Behold, neither feathers nor appearance of feathers did

burgeon out, but verily my hair did turn into ruggedness, and my tender skin waxed tough and hard, my fingers and toes, losing the number of five, changed into hoofs, and I grew a great tail. Now my face became monstrous, my nostrils wide, my lips hanging down, and my ears rugged with hair. Neither could I see any comfort of my transformation, for my members increased likewise, and so without all help (viewing every part of my poor body) I perceived that I was no bird, but a plain ass.

Then I thought to blame Fotis, but being deprived as well of language as of human shape, I looked upon her with my hanging lips and watery eyes.

As soon as she espied me in such sort she cried out, "Alas, poor wretch that I am, I am utterly cast away. The fear that I was in, and my haste, beguiled me, but especially the mistaking of the box deceived me. But it matters not much, since a medicine may be got for this sooner than for any other thing. For if thou couldst get a rose and eat it, thou wouldst be delivered from the shape of an ass and become my Lucius again. Would to God I had gathered some garlands this evening past, according to my custom. Then thou shouldst not continue an ass one night's space. But in the morning I will seek some remedy."

Thus Fotis lamented in pitiful sort. But I, now a perfect ass, and instead of Lucius a brute beast, yet retained the sense and understanding

of a man. I devised a good space with myself, whether it were best for me to tear this mischievous and wicked harlot with my mouth, or to kick and kill her with my heels. But a better thought reduced me from so rash a purpose, for I feared lest by the death of Fotis I should be deprived of all remedy and help.

So, shaking my head and dissimulating my ire, and taking my adversity in good part, I went into the stable to my own horse. There I found another ass of Milo's (sometime my host). I did verily think that my own horse (if there were any natural conscience or knowledge in brute beasts) would take pity upon me, and proffer me lodging for that night, but it chanced far otherwise. My horse and the ass, as it were, consented together to work my harm, and, fearing lest I should eat up their provender, would in no wise suffer me to come nigh the manger, but kicked me with their heels from their meat, which I myself gave them the night before.

Then I, being thus handled by them and driven away, got me into a corner of the stable, where (while I remembered their uncourtesy, and how on the morrow I should be turned again to Lucius by the help of a rose, when I might revenge myself of my own horse) I fortun'd to espy, in the middle of a pillar sustaining the rafters of the stable, the image of the goddess Hippone, garnished and decked round about with fair fresh roses.

In hope of present remedy I leaped up with my

fore-feet as high as I could, and, stretching out my neck, with my lips coveted to snatch some roses. But in an evil hour did I go about that enterprise, for behold, the boy to whom I gave charge of my horse came in, and finding me climbing upon the pillar, ran threateningly towards me, and said, "How long shall we suffer this vile ass, that not only eats up his fellows' meat, but also would spoil the images of the gods? Why do I not kill this lame thief and weak wretch?"

Therewithal, looking about for some cudgel, he espied a faggot of wood, and choosing out a crabbed truncheon of the biggest he could find, never ceased beating of me (poor wretch) until such time as by great noise and rumbling he heard the doors of the house burst open, and the neighbours crying in lamentable sort, which enforced him (being stricken in fear) to fly his way.

By and by a troop of thieves entered in, and kept every part and corner of the house with weapons. As men resorted to aid and help those who were within doors, the thieves resisted and kept them back, for every man was armed with his sword and target in his hand, the glimpses whereof did yield out such light as if it had been day.

Then they broke open a great chest with double locks and bolts, wherein was laid all the treasure of Milo, and ransacked the same; which when they had done they packed it up, and gave every one a portion to carry. But when they

had more than they could bear away, yet were they loath to leave any behind. So they came into the stable, and took us two poor asses and my horse, and loaded us with greater trusses than we were able to bear.

When we were out of the house, they followed us with great staves, and bade one of their fellows tarry behind and bring them tidings what was done concerning the robbery ; and so they beat us forward over great hills out of the highway.

But I, what with my heavy burden, and my long journey, did nothing differ from a dead ass, and I determined with myself to seek some civil remedy, and, by invocation of the name of the prince of the country, to be delivered from so many miseries. And on a time, as I passed through a great fair, I came amongst a multitude of Greeks, and I thought to call upon the renowned name of the Emperor, and to say, "O Cæsar"; and I cried out aloud, "O," but "Cæsar" I could in no wise pronounce. The thieves, little regarding my crying, did lay me on, and beat my wretched skin in such sort that after it was neither apt nor meet to make sieves or strainers. Howbeit, at last Jupiter ministered to me an unhopèd remedy, for when we had passed through many towns and villages, I fortunèd to espy a pleasant garden, wherein, besides many other flowers of delectable hue, were new and fresh roses.

Being very joyful and desirous to catch some as I passed by, I drew nearer and nearer. But

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while my lips watered upon them, I thought of a better advice, more profitable for me. If from an ass I should become a man, I might fall into the hands of the thieves, and either by suspicion that I were some witch, or for fear that I would utter their theft, I should be slain ; wherefore I abstained for that time from eating the roses, and, enduring my present adversity, I ate hay as other asses did.

Here ends the Third Book of Lucius Apuleius



THE FOURTH BOOK OF
LUCIUS APULEIUS OF
THE GOLDEN ASS



THE FOURTH BOOK OF LUCIUS APULEIUS OF THE GOLDEN ASS

*XVIII.—How Apuleius, thinking to go to eat
roses, was cruelly beaten by a gardener
and chased by dogs*

WHEN noon was come, and the broiling heat of the sun had most power, we turned into a village to certain of the thieves' acquaintances and friends, for verily their meeting and embracing together gave me (poor ass) cause to deem them so. They took the truss from my back, and gave their friends part of the treasure which was in it, and they seemed to whisper and tell them that it was stolen goods.

After we were unladen of our burdens, they let us loose into a meadow to pasture, but my own horse and Milo's ass would not suffer me to feed there with them, but I must seek my dinner in some other place. Wherefore I leaped into a garden, which was behind the stable, and being well-nigh perished with hunger, although I could find nothing there but raw and green sallets, yet I filled my hungry guts therewithal abundantly. Praying to all the gods, I looked

about in every place to see if I could espy any red roses in the gardens by, and my being solitary and alone put me in good hope that if I could find any remedy I should presently from an ass be changed into Lucius out of every man's sight.

While I considered these things, I looked about, and behold, I saw afar off a shadowed valley adjoining a wood, where, amongst divers other herbs and pleasant verdures, I thought I saw many flourishing roses of bright damask colour. And I said within my bestial mind, "Verily the place is the place of Venus and the Graces, where secretly glitters the royal hue of so lively and delectable a flower."

Then, desiring that help of the guide of my good fortune, I ran lustily towards the wood, insomuch that I felt myself no more an ass, but a swift coursing horse. But my agility and quickness could not prevent the cruelty of my fortune, for when I came to the place I perceived that they were no roses, neither tender nor pleasant, neither moistened with the heavenly drops of dew nor celestial liquor, which grew out of the thicket and thorns there. Neither did I perceive that there was any valley at all, but only the bank of the river environed with great thick trees, which had long branches like laurel, bearing a flower without any manner of scent; the common people call them by the name of laurel roses, which are very poisonous to all manner of beasts.

Then was I so entangled with unhappy fortune that I little esteemed my own danger, and went

willingly to eat of those roses, though I knew them to be present poison. As I drew near, a young man who seemed to be the gardener came upon me, and when he perceived that I had devoured up all his herbs in the garden, he came, swearing, with a great staff in his hand, and laid upon me in such sort that I was well-nigh dead. But I speedily devised some remedy for myself, for I lifted up my legs and kicked him with my hind heels, so that I left him lying at the hill-foot well-nigh slain, and ran away.

Incontinently out came his wife, who, seeing her husband half dead, cried and howled in pitiful sort, and went towards her husband, to the intent that by her loud cries she might purchase to me present destruction. Then all the persons of the town, moved and raised by her noise, came forth, and cried for dogs to tear me down. Out came a great company of ban-dogs and mastiffs, more fit to pull down bears and lions than me.

When I beheld them, I thought verily that I should presently die, but I turned myself about and ran as fast as ever I might to the stable from whence I came. Then the men of the town called in their dogs, and took me and bound me to the staple of a post, and scourged me with a great knotted whip till I was well-nigh dead.

*XIX.—How Apuleius was prevented of his purpose,
and how the thieves came to their den*

NOT long after, the thieves loaded us again, and especially me, and brought us forth out of the stable. But when we had gone a good part of our journey, what with the long way, my great burden, the beating of staves, and my worn hoofs, I was so weary that I could scarcely go. Then I saw a little before me a river, running with fair water, and I said to myself, "Behold, now I have found a good occasion. For I will fall down when I come yonder, and surely I will not rise again, neither with scourging nor beating, for I had rather be slain there presently than go any farther."

The cause why I determined so to do was this. I thought that when the thieves saw me so feeble and weak that I could not travel, to the intent they would not stay in their journey, they would take off the burden from my back and put it upon my fellows, and for my further punishment leave me as a prey to the wolves and ravenous beasts. But evil fortune prevented so good a consideration; for the other ass, being of the same purpose that I was of, by feigned and coloured weariness, fell down first, with all his burden, upon the ground, as though he were dead, and he would not rise neither with beating nor pricking, nor stand upon his feet, though they pulled him up by the tail, by his legs, and by his ears.

When the thieves beheld this, as without all hope, they said to one another, "What? Should we stand here so long about a dead ass, or rather one of stone? Let us be gone." And so they took his burden, and divided some to me and some to my horse. And then they drew out their swords and cut off his legs, and threw his body from the point of a hill down into a great valley.

Then I, considering with myself of the evil fortune of my poor companion, purposed now to forget all subtlety and deceit, and to play the good ass, to get my masters' favour, for I perceived by their talk that we were well-nigh come home to our journey's end. And after we had passed over a little hill, we came to our appointed place, where, when we were unladen of our burdens, and all things carried in, I tumbled and wallowed in the dust, to refresh myself, instead of water.

The thing and the time compel me to make description of the places, and specially of the den which the thieves inhabited. I will prove my wit what I can do, and then consider you whether I was an ass in judgement and sense, or no.

First, there was an exceeding great hill compassed about with big trees, very high, with many turning bottoms, full of sharp stones whereby it was inaccessible. There were many winding and hollow valleys environed with thickets and thorns, and naturally fortified round about. From the top of the hill ran a running river as clear as silver, and watered all the valleys below, so that it seemed like a sea enclosed, or a standing flood.

Before the den, where was no hill, stood a high tower, and at the foot thereof were sheepcotes fenced and wattled with clay. Before the gate of the house were paths made, instead of walls, in such a manner that you would easily judge it to be a very den for thieves; and there was nothing else save a little cote covered with thatch, wherein the thieves were nightly accustomed to watch by order, as afterwards I perceived.

When they were all crept into the house and we fast tied with halters at the door, they began to chide with an old woman there, crooked with age, who had the government and rule of all the house, and said, "How is it, old witch, old trot and strumpet, that thou sittest idly all day at home, and (having no regard to our perilous labours) hast provided nothing for our suppers, but sittest eating and swilling thyself from morning till night?"

Then the old woman trembled, and, scarcely able to speak, said, "Behold, my puissant and faithful masters, you shall have meat and pottage enough by and by. Here is, first, store of bread, wine in plenty, filled in clean rinsed pots; likewise here is hot water prepared to bathe you."

When she had said this, they put off all their garments and refreshed themselves by the fire. And after they were washed and anointed with oil, they sat down at a table garnished with all kind of dainty meats. They were no sooner sat down, but in came another company of young men, more in number than before, who seemed

likewise to be thieves. They brought in their prey of gold and silver, plate, jewels and rich robes, and when they had likewise washed, they sat amongst the rest and served one another by order. Then they drank and ate exceedingly, crying, laughing and making such noise that I thought I was amongst the tyrannous and wild Lapithes, Thebans and Centaurs.

At length one of them, more valiant than the rest, spoke thus, "We verily have manfully conquered the house of Milo of Hypata, and beside all the riches and treasure which by force we have brought away, we are all come home safe, and are increased the more by this horse and this ass. But you that have roved about in the country of Bœotia have lost your valiant Captain Lamathus, whose life I more regarded than all this treasure which you have brought. And therefore the memory of him shall be renowned for ever amongst the most noble kings and valiant captains; but you are accustomed, when you go abroad, like men with ganders' hearts, to creep through every corner and hole for every trifle."

Then one of them that came last answered, "Why, are you only ignorant that the greater the number is, the sooner they may rob and spoil the house? And although the family be dispersed in divers lodgings, yet every man had rather defend his own life than save the riches of his master; but when there be but a few thieves, then will they rather not only regard themselves,

but also their substance, how little or great so ever it be. And to the intent you may believe me I will show you an example. We were come nothing nigh unto Thebes, where is the fountain of our art and science, but we learned where a rich chuff,¹ called Chryseros, did dwell, who for fear of offices in the public weal, dissimulated his estate, and lived sole and solitary in a small cot (howbeit replenished with abundance of treasure), and went daily in ragged and torn apparel. Wherefore we devised with ourselves to go to his house and spoil him of all his riches. And when night came, we drew towards his door, which was so strongly closed that we could neither move it nor lift it out of the hooks, and we thought it not best to break it open, lest by the noise we should raise up (to our harm) the neighbours by. Then our strong and valiant Captain Lamathus, trusting his own strength and force, thrust in his hand through a hole of the door, and thought to pull back the bolt, but the covetous caitiff Chryseros, being awake and making no noise, came softly to the door and caught his hand, and with a great nail nailed it fast to a post, which when he had done, he ran up to a high chamber, and called every one of his neighbours by name, desiring them to succour him with all possible speed, for his house was afire. Then every one, for fear of their own danger, came running out to aid him,

¹ "Chuff" means either a boorish or an avaricious fellow; Apuleius wrote "Nummularius," which means a money-changer and lender. "Chuff" is worth keeping.—ED.

wherewith we (fearing our present peril) knew not what was best to be done—whether we should leave our companion there, or yield ourselves to die with him. But we by his consent devised a better way. For we cut off his arm by the elbow, and so let it hang there. Then we bound his wound with clouts, lest we should be traced by the drops of blood ; which done we took Lamathus and led him away for fear we should be taken. But when we were so nigh pursued that we were in present danger, and Lamathus could not keep in our company by reason of faintness, he, perceiving that it was not for his profit to linger behind, spoke to us as a man of singular courage and virtue, desiring us by much entreaty and prayer, and by the puissance of the God Mars, and the faith of our confederacy, to deliver his body from torment and miserable captivity. And further, he said, ‘How is it possible that so courageous a captain can live without his hand, wherewith he could before-times rob and slay so many people? I would think myself sufficiently happy if I might be slain by one of you.’ But when he saw that we all refused to commit any such act, he drew out his sword with his other hand, and after he had often kissed it he thrust it clean through his body. Then we honoured the corpse of so puissant a man, and wrapped it in linen clothes, and threw him into the sea : so lies our master Lamathus buried and hid in the grave of water, and ended his life as I have declared.

“ But Alcinus, though he was a man of great enterprise, yet could he not take warning by Lamathus, nor void himself from evil fortune : for on a day when he had entered an old woman’s house, to rob her, he went up into a high chamber, where he should first have strangled her, but he had more regard to throw down the bags of money and gold out at the window to us that stood under. And when he was so greedy that he would leave nothing behind, he went to the old woman’s bed, where she lay asleep, and would have taken off the coverlet to have thrown down likewise, but she awaked and (kneeling upon her knees) desired him in this manner, ‘ O sir, I pray you cast not away such torn and ragged clouts into my neighbours’ houses, for they are rich enough and need no such things.’ Then Alcinus (thinking her words to be true) was brought in belief that such things as he had thrown out already, and such things as he should throw out after, had not fallen down to his fellows, but into other men’s houses, wherefore he went to the window to see ; and as he thought to behold the places round about, thrusting his body out of the window, the old woman marked him well, and came behind him softly, and although she had but small strength, yet with a sudden force she took him by the heels and thrust him out headlong, and so he fell upon a marvellous great stone and burst his ribs, whereby he vomited and spewed flakes of blood, and presently died. Then we threw him into

the river likewise, as we had done Lamathus before.

“When we had thus lost two of our companions, we liked not Thebes, but marched towards the next city called Platæa, where we found a man of great fame, named Demochares, who purposed to set forth a great game, where should be a trial of all kind of weapons. He was come of a good house, marvellous rich, liberal, and well deserved that which he had, and had prepared many shows and pleasures for the common people : insomuch that there is no man can either by wit or eloquence show in words his worthy preparations. For first, he had provided all sorts of arms ; he greatly delighted in hunting and chasing ; he ordained great towers and tables to move hither and thither ; he made many places to chase and encounter in ; he had ready a great number of men and wild beasts, and many condemned persons were brought from the judgement place to try and fight with those beasts. But amongst so great preparations of noble price, he bestowed the most part of his patrimony in buying bears, which he nourished to his great cost, and esteemed more than all the other beasts which either by chasing he caught himself, or which he bought dearly, or which were given him by divers of his friends. Howbeit for all his sumptuous cost, he could not be free from the malicious eyes of envy ; for some of them were well-nigh dead, with too long tying up, some meagre with the broiling heat of the sun, some languished with

lying idle ; but all (having sundry diseases) were so afflicted that they died one after another, and there was well-nigh none left, in such sort that you might see them lying in the streets piteously dead, and the common people, having no other meat to feed on, little regarding any curiosity, would come forth and fill their bellies with the flesh of the bears. Then by and by Babulus and I devised a pretty sport. We drew one of the greatest of the bears to our lodging, as though we would prepare to eat thereof. We flayed off his skin and kept his uncles whole, but we meddled not with the head, but cut it off by the neck, and so let it hang to the skin. Then we raised off the flesh from the back and cast dust thereon, and set it in the sun to dry."

XX.—How Thrasileon was disguised in a bear's skin, and how he was handled

"WHILE the skin was adrying, we made merry with the flesh, and then we devised with ourselves that one of us, more valiant than the rest both in body and courage (so that he would consent thereto), should put on the skin, and (feigning that he were a bear) should be led to Demochares' house in the night, by which means we thought to be received and let in. Many were desirous to play the bear, but especially one Thrasileon, of a courageous mind, would take this enterprise in hand. Then we put him into the bear's skin, which fitted him

finely in every point. We buckled it fast under his belly, and covered the seam with the hair that it might not be seen. After this we made little holes through the bear's head and through his nostrils and eyes for Thrasileon to see out and take wind at, in such sort that he seemed a very lively and natural beast.

"When this was done, we went into a cave which we hired for the purpose, and he crept in after like a bear with a good courage. Thus we began our subtlety, and then we imagined thus. We feigned letters as though they came from one Nicanor, dwelling in the country of Thracia, who was of great acquaintance with this Demochares, wherein we wrote that he had sent him, being his friend, the first-fruits of his coursing and hunting.

"When night was come (which was a meet time for our purpose) we brought Thrasileon and our forged letters, and presented them to Demochares. When Demochares beheld this mighty bear, and saw the liberality of Nicanor his friend, he commanded his servant to deliver to us ten crowns, as he had great store in his coffers. Then (as the novelty of a thing is accustomed to stir men's minds to behold the same) many persons came on every side to see this bear. But Thrasileon (lest they should by curious viewing and prying perceive the truth) ran upon them to put them in fear, so that they durst not come nigh. The people said, 'Verily, Demochares is right happy, in that, after the

death of so many beasts, he has got (maugre fortune's head)¹ so goodly a bear.' Then Demochares commanded that with great care he should be put into the park by, amongst the other beasts ; but I immediately spoke to him, and said, ' Sir, I pray you take heed how you put a beast tired with the heat of the sun, and with long travel, amongst others, which (as I here say) have divers maladies and diseases. Let him rather lie in some open place of your house nigh to some water, where he may take air and ease himself, for do not you know that such kind of beasts greatly delight to couch under shadow of trees and hillocks, nigh to pleasant wells and waters? '

" Hereby Demochares, admonished, and remembering how many he had before that perished, was contented that we should put the bear where we would. Moreover, we said to him, that we ourselves were determined to lie all night nigh to the bear, to look to him, and to give him meat and drink at his due hour. Then he answered, ' Verily, masters, you need not put yourselves to such pains ; for I have men that serve for nothing but that purpose. '

" So we took leave of him and departed. When we were come without the gates of the town we perceived before us a great sepulchre standing out of the highway, in a privy and secret place.

¹ Apuleius wrote: "happy in that . . . by a new acquisition he had somehow stood up against fortune." The phrase in parentheses is a good instance of Adlington's not illegitimate use of a slightly inaccurate but picturesque idiom.—ED.

We went thither and opened the mouth thereof, where we found the sides covered with the corruption of man, and the ashes and dust of his long-buried body. We got in ourselves to bring our purpose to pass, and (having regard to the dark time of the night, according to our custom) when we thought that every man was asleep, we went with our weapons and besieged the house of Demochares round about.

“Thrasileon was ready at hand, and leaped out of the cavern, and went to kill all such as he found asleep, but when he came to the porter he opened the gates and let us all in : and then he showed us a large counter, wherein he saw put (the night before) a great abundance of treasure, which when by violence we had broken open, I bid every one of my fellows take as much gold and silver as they could bear away, and carry it to the sepulchre, and while they carried, I stood at the gate, watching diligently when they would return. The bear ran about the house to make such of the family afraid as fortunèd to wake and come out. For who is he that is so puissant and courageous that at the ugly sight of so great a monster will not quail and keep his chamber, especially in the night?

“But when we had brought this matter to so good a point, there chanced a pitiful case. For as I looked for my companions to come from the sepulchre, behold, there was a boy of the house that fortunèd to look out at a window and espied the bear running about ; and he went and told

all the servants of the house, whereupon incontinently they came forth with torches, lanterns and other lights that they might see all the yard over, they came with clubs, spears, naked swords, greyhounds and mastiffs to slay the poor beast.

“During this broil I thought to run away, but because I would see Thrasileon fighting with the dogs, I lay behind the gate to behold him. And although I might perceive that he was well-nigh dead, yet remembered he his own faithfulness and ours, and valiantly resisted the gaping and ravenous mouths of the hellhounds, so took he in gree the pageant which willingly he took in hand himself, and with much ado tumbled at length out of the house. But when he was at liberty abroad, yet could he not save himself, for all the dogs of the street joined themselves to the greyhounds and mastiffs of the house, and came upon him. Alas, what a pitiful sight it was, when our poor Thrasileon was thus environed and compassed with so many dogs, that tore and rent him miserably.

“Then I (impatient of so great his misery) ran in amongst the press of the people, and (aiding him with my words as much as I might) exhorted them all in this manner, ‘O great and extreme mischance, what a precious and excellent beast have we lost!’ But my words did nothing prevail. For there came out a tall man with a spear in his hand that thrust him clean through, and afterwards many that stood by drew out their swords, and so they killed him. But verily our

good Captain Thrasileon, the honour of our comfort,¹ received his death so patiently that he would not bewray the league between us, either by crying, howling or any other means, but (being torn by dogs, and wounded with weapons) did yield forth a doleful cry, more like to a beast than a man ; and taking his present fortune in good part, with courage and glory enough finished his life, with such a terror to the assembly that no person was so hardy (until it was day) as to touch him, though he were stark dead. But at last there came a butcher more valiant than the rest, who (opening the paunch of the beast) slit out a hardy and venturous thief.

“ In this manner we lost our Captain Thrasileon, but he lost not his fame and honour. When this was done we packed up our treasure, which we committed to the sepulchre to keep, and got us out of the bounds of Platæa, thinking with ourselves that there was more fidelity amongst the dead than amongst the living, by reason that our prize was so surely kept in the sepulchre. So (being wearied with the weight of our burdens, and well-nigh tired with long travel, having lost three of our soldiers) we are come home with these present cheats.”

Thus when they had spoken (in memory of their slain companions) they took cups of gold

¹ Perhaps an original (1546) misprint for “consort,” which was used by Shakespeare and others for “company” or “band” (“factionis”), in the original. I retain the misprint for its whimsical suitability.—ED.

and sang hymns to the god Mars, and laid them down to sleep. Then the old woman gave us fresh barley without measure, insomuch that my horse fed so abundantly that he might well think he was at some banquet that day. But I (who was accustomed to eat bran and flour) thought that but a sour kind of meat, wherefore espying a corner where lay loaves of bread for all the house, I got me thither, and filled my hungry guts withal.

XXI.—How the thieves stole away a gentlewoman, and brought her to their den

WHEN night was come, the thieves awaked and rose up. When they had buckled on their weapons, and disguised their faces with visards, they departed, and yet for all the great sleep that came upon me, I could in no wise leave eating, and whereas, when I was a man, I could be contented with one or two loaves at the most, now my guts were so greedy that three panniers full would scantily serve me. While I considered all these things the morning came, and though loath to leave the loaves, my assy sense of shame led me to a river, at which I quenched my thirst.

Suddenly after, the thieves returned home, careful and heavy, bringing no burdens with them, no, not so much as bag or baggage, save only a maiden that seemed by her habit to be some gentlewoman born, and the daughter of

some worthy matron of that country, who was so fair and beautiful, that though I were an ass, yet had I a great affection to her. The virgin lamented and tore her hair and spoiled her garments for the great sorrow she was in. But the thieves brought her within the cave, and assayed to comfort her thus, "Weep not, fair gentlewoman, we pray you, for be you assured that we will do no outrage nor violence to your person ; but take patience awhile for our profit. Necessity and poor estate compelled us to do this enterprise. We warrant you that your parents (although they be covetous) will be contented to give us a great quantity of money to redeem and ransom you from our hands."

With such and like flattering words they endeavoured to appease the gentlewoman ; howbeit, she would in no case be comforted, but put her head between her knees and cried piteously. Then they called the old woman and commanded her to sit by the maiden, and pacify her dolour as much as she might. And they departed away to rob, as they accustomed to do.

But the virgin would not assuage her griefs nor mitigate her sorrow by any entreaty of the old woman, but howled and sobbed in such sort that she made me (poor ass) likewise to weep. Thus she said, "Alas, can I, poor wretch, live any longer, that am come of so good a house, forsaken of all my parents, friends and family, made a rapine and prey, closed servilely in this stony prison, deprived of all pleasure wherein I have

been brought up, thrown in danger, ready to be rent in pieces amongst so many sturdy thieves and dreadful robbers, can I (I say) cease from weeping or live any longer ? ”

Thus she cried and lamented, and after she had wearied herself with sorrow and blubbered her face with tears, she closed the windows of her hollow eyes and laid her down to sleep. After she had slept, she rose again, like a furious and mad woman, and beat her breast and comely face more than she did before. Then the old woman inquired the causes of her new and sudden lamentation, to whom (sighing in pitiful sort) she answered, “ Alas, now I am utterly undone, now I am out of all hope, O give me a knife to kill me, or a halter to hang me.” Whereat the old woman was more angry, and severely commanded her to tell her the cause of her sorrow, and why after her sleep she should renew her dolour and miserable weeping. “ What, think you ” (quoth she) “ to deceive our young men of the price of your ransom ? No, no. Therefore cease your crying, for the thieves little esteem your howling. And if you will not, I will surely burn you alive.”

Hereat the maiden was greatly afraid, and kissed her hand, and said, “ O mother, take pity upon me and my wretched fortune, and give me licence awhile to speak, for I think I shall not long live. Let there be mercy ripe and frank in your venerable hoar head, and hear the sum of my calamity. There was a comely young man, who for his bounty and grace was beloved

entirely of all the town, my cousin-german, and but three years older than I. We two were nourished and brought up in one house, and lay under one roof and in one chamber, and at length by promise of marriage and by consent of our parents we were contracted together. The marriage day was come, the house was garnished with laurel, and torches were set in every place in the honour of Hymenæus, my espouse was accompanied by his parents, kinsfolk and friends, and made sacrifice in the temples and public places. And as my unhappy mother pampered me in her lap, and decked me like a bride, kissing me sweetly, and making me a parent for children, behold there came in a great multitude of thieves, armed like men of war, with naked swords in their hands. They went not about to do any harm, neither to take anything away, but broke into the chamber where I was, and violently took me out of my mother's arms, while none of the family would resist for fear. In this sort was our marriage disturbed, like the marriage of Hyppodame and Perithous. But behold, good mother, now my unhappy fortune is renewed and increased ; for I dreamed in my sleep that I was pulled out of our house, out of our chamber, and out of my bed, and that I roamed about in solitary and unknown places, calling upon the name of my unfortunate husband, and that he (as soon as he perceived that I was taken away, even smelling with perfumes and crowned with garlands) traced me by my steps, desiring the aid

of the people to assist him, in that his wife was violently stolen away. And as he went crying up and down, one of the thieves, moved by indignation by reason of his pursuit, took up a stone that lay at his feet and threw it at my husband and killed him. By the terror of which sight, and the fear of so dreadful a dream, I awaked."

Then the old woman, rendering out like sighs, began to speak in this sort, "My daughter, take a good heart unto you, and be not afraid at feigned and strange visions or dreams, for as the visions of the day are accounted false and untrue, so the visions of the night do often chance contrary. And to dream of weeping, beating and killing is a token of good luck and prosperous change, whereas contrary, to dream of laughing, carnal dalliance and good cheer is sign of sadness, sickness, loss of substance and displeasure. But I will tell thee a pleasant tale to put away all thy sorrow and to revive thy spirits." And so she began in this manner.

*XXII.—The most pleasant and delectable tale
of the marriage of Cupid and Psyche*

THERE was once a certain king, inhabiting in the West parts, who had to wife a noble dame, by whom he had three daughters, exceeding fair: of whom the two elder were of such comely shape and beauty, as to excel and pass all other women living, whereby they were thought, worthily, to deserve the praise and commendation

of every person, and deservedly to be preferred above the residue of the common sort. Yet the singular passing beauty and maidenly majesty of the youngest daughter did so far surmount and excel them two that no earthly creature could by any means sufficiently express or set out the same ; by reason whereof (after the fame of this excellent maiden was spread abroad in every part of the city) the citizens and strangers there, being inwardly pricked by zealous affection to behold her famous person, came daily by thousands, hundreds and scores to her father's palace, and as if astonished with admiration of her incomparable beauty did no less worship and reverence her, with crosses, signs and tokens, and other divine adorations, according to the custom of the old used rites and ceremonies, than if she were Lady Venus indeed. And shortly after the report was spread into the next cities and bordering regions that the goddess whom the deep seas had borne and brought forth, and the froth of the spurning waves had nourished, to the intent to show her high magnificency and divine power in earth, to such as erst did honour and worship her, was now conversant amongst mortal men, or else that the earth, and not the seas, by a new concourse and influence of the celestial planets, had budded and yielded forth a new Venus, endued with the flower of virginity.

So daily more and more increased this opinion, and now is her flying fame dispersed into the next island, and well-nigh into every part and province

of the whole world. Whereupon innumerable strangers resorted from far countries, adventuring themselves by long journeys on land, and by great perils on water, to behold this glorious virgin. By occasion whereof such a contempt grew towards the goddess Venus, that no person travelled to the town Paphos, nor to the isle of Cnidus, no, nor to Cythera, to worship her. Her ornaments were thrown out, her temples defaced, her pillows and cushions torn, her ceremonies neglected, her images and statues uncrowned, and her bare altars unswept, and foul with the ashes of old burned sacrifice, for why every person honoured and worshipped this maiden instead of Venus; and in the morning at her first coming abroad, offered to her oblations, provided banquets, called her by the name of Venus who was not Venus indeed, and in her honour presented flowers and garlands in most reverent fashion.

This sudden change and alteration of celestial honour did greatly inflame and kindle the mind of very Venus, who (unable to temper herself from indignation, shaking her head in raging sort) reasoned with herself in this manner, “Behold the original parent of all these elements, behold the Lady Venus renowned throughout all the world, with whom a mortal maiden is joined now partaker of my honour; my name, registered in the city of heaven, is profaned and made vile by terrene absurdities, if I shall suffer any mortal creature to present my Majesty on earth, or if any

shall bear about a false furnished shape of my person ! In vain did Paris that shepherd (in whose just judgment and confidence the great Jupiter had affiance) prefer me above the residue of the goddesses for the excellency of my beauty. But she, whatsoever she be that hath usurped my honour, shall shortly repent her of her unlawful estate."

Instantly she called her winged son, Cupid, rash enough, and hardy, who, by his evil manners, contemning all public justice and law, armed with fire and arrows, running up and down in the nights from house to house, and corrupting the lawful marriages of every person, doth nothing but that which is evil. Although he were of his own proper nature sufficiently prone to work mischief, yet she egged him forward with words, and brought him to the city, and showed him Psyche (for so the maiden was called), and having told the cause of her anger, not without great rage, "I pray thee" (quoth she), "my dear child, by motherly bond of love, by the sweet wounds of thy piercing darts, by the pleasant heat of thy fire, revenge the injury which is done to thy mother, by the false and disobedient beauty of a mortal maiden, and I pray thee without delay, that she may fall in love with the most miserable creature living, the most poor, the most crooked, and the most vile, that there may be none found in all the world of like wretchedness."

When she had spoken these words she embraced and kissed her son, and took her voyage towards the sea.

When she was come to the sea she began to call the gods and goddesses, who were obedient at her voice. For incontinent came the daughters of Nereus singing with tunes melodiously: Portunus with his bristled and rough beard: Salacia, with her bosom full of fish: Palemon, the driver of the dolphin, the trumpeters of Triton, leaping hither and thither, and blowing with heavenly noises. Such was the company which followed Venus marching towards the ocean sea.

In the mean season Psyche with all her beauty received no fruit of her honour. She was wondered at of all, she was praised of all, but she perceived that no king nor prince, nor any of the inferior sort, did repair to woo her. Everyone marvelled at her divine beauty, as it were at some image well painted and set out. Her other two sisters, which were nothing so greatly exalted by the people, were royally married to two kings. But the virgin Psyche, sitting at home alone, lamented her solitary life, and being disquieted both in mind and body, although she pleased all the world, yet hated she herself her own beauty.

Hereupon the miserable father of this unfortunate daughter, suspecting that the gods and powers of heaven envied her estate, went to the town called Miletus to receive the oracle of Apollo, where he made his prayers and offered sacrifice, and desired a husband for his daughter. But Apollo, though he were a Greek and of the

country of Ionia, because of the foundation of Miletus, gave answer in Latin verse, the sense whereof was this :

“ Let Psyche’s corpse be clad in mourning
weed,
And set on rock of yonder hill aloft.
Her husband is no wight of human seed,
But serpent dire and fierce as may be
thought,
Who flies with wings above in starry skies
And doth subdue each thing with fiery flight.
The gods themselves and powers that seem
so wise,
With mighty Jove, be subject to his might ;
The rivers black and deadly floods of pain
And darkness eke as thrall to him remain.”

The king, once happy, when he heard the prophecy of Apollo returned home sad and sorrowful, and declared to his wife the miserable and unhappy fate of his daughter. Then they began to lament and weep, and passed over many days in great sorrow.

But now the time approached of Psyche’s marriage ; preparation was made, black torches were lighted, the pleasant songs were turned into pitiful cries, the melody of Hymenæus was ended with deadly howling, the maiden that should be married did wipe her eyes with her veil. All the family and people of the city wept likewise, and with great lamentation was ordained a remiss

time for that day ; but necessity compelled that Psyche should be brought to her appointed place, according to the divine commandment. And when the solemnity was ended, they went to bring this sorrowful spouse, not to her marriage, but to her final end and burial.

But while the father and mother of Psyche went forward, weeping and crying, to do this enterprise, Psyche spoke to them in this sort, "Why torment you your unhappy age with continual dolour ? Why trouble you your spirits, which are more rather mine than yours ? Why soil ye your faces with tears, which I ought to adore and worship ? Why tear you my eyes in yours ? Why pull you your hoar hairs ? Why knock you your breasts for me ? Now you see the reward of my excellent beauty : now, now, you perceive (but too late) the plague of envy. When the people did honour me and call me new Venus, then you should have wept, then you should have sorrowed, as though I had been then dead. For now that I see and perceive that I am come to this misery by the name only of Venus, bring me, and (as fortune hath appointed) place me on the top of the rock. I greatly desire to end my marriage, I greatly covet to see my husband ; why do I delay ? Why should I refuse him that is appointed to destroy all the world ? "

Thus ended she her words, and thrust herself amongst the people that followed. Then they brought her to the appointed rock of the high

hill, and set her thereon, and so departed. The torches and lights were put out with the tears of the people, and every man gone home: the miserable parents, well-nigh consumed with sorrow, gave themselves to everlasting darkness.

Here ends the Fourth Book of Lucius Apuleius

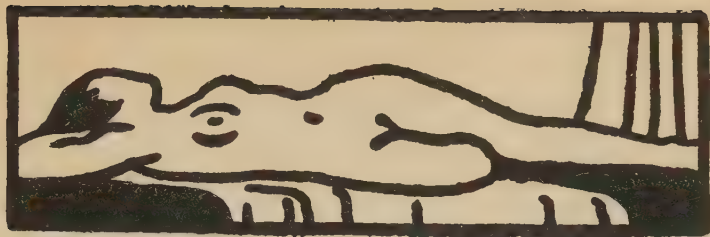




THE FIFTH BOOK OF
LUCIUS APULEIUS OF
THE GOLDEN ASS



CUPID AND PSYCHE



THE FIFTH BOOK OF LUCIUS APULEIUS OF THE GOLDEN ASS

*XXII.—The most pleasant and delectable tale of
the marriage of Cupid and Psyche*

THUS poor Psyche, being left alone weeping and trembling on the top of the rock, was blown by the gentle air of shrilling Zephyrus and carried from the hill, with a meek wind, which retained her garments up, and by little and little brought her down into a deep valley, where she was laid in a bed of most sweet and fragrant flowers.

Fair Psyche, being sweetly couched amongst the soft and tender herbs, as in a bed of sweet and fragrant flowers, and having qualified the troubles and thoughts of her restless mind, was now well reposed. When she had refreshed herself sufficiently with sleep, she rose with a more quiet and pacified mind, and fortunèd to espy a pleasant wood environed with great and mighty trees. She espied likewise a running river as clear as crystal. In the midst of the wood, well-nigh at the fall of the river, was a princely edifice, wrought and built, not by the art or hand of man, but by

the mighty power of God : and you would judge, at the first entry therein, that it were some pleasant and worthy mansion for the powers of heaven. For the embowings above were of citron and ivory, propped and undermined with pillars of gold, the walls covered and sealed with silver, and divers sorts of beasts were graven and carved, that seemed to encounter with such as entered in. All things were so curiously and finely wrought, that it seemed either to be the work of some demigod, or God Himself. The pavement was all of precious stones, divided and cut one from another, whereon was carved divers kinds of pictures, in such sort that blessed and thrice blessed were they which might go upon such a pavement. Every part and angle of the house was so well adorned that, by reason of the precious stones and inestimable treasure there, it glittered and shone in such sort that the chambers, porches and doors gave light as it had been the sun. Neither otherwise did the other treasure of the house disagree to so great a majesty, that verily it seemed in every point a heavenly palace fabricate and built for Jupiter himself.

Then Psyche, moved with delectation, approached nigh, and taking a bold heart entered into the house, and beheld everything there with great affection ; she saw storehouses wrought exceeding fine and replenished with abundance of riches. Finally there could nothing be devised which lacked there. But amongst such great store of treasure this was more marvellous, that

there was no closure, bolt or lock to keep the same.

While with great pleasure she viewed all these things, she heard a voice without any body, that said, "Why do you marvel, madam, at so great riches? Behold, all that you see is at your commandment. Wherefore, go you into the chamber and repose yourself upon the bed, and desire what bath you will have, and we whose voices you hear be your servants, and ready to minister to you according to your desire. In the mean season, royal meats and dainty dishes shall be prepared for you."

Then Psyche perceived the felicity of Divine Providence, and according to the advertisement of the incorporeal voices, she first reposed herself upon the bed, and then refreshed her body in the baths. This done, she saw the table garnished with meats, and a chair to sit down.

When Psyche was sat down, all sorts of divine meats and wines were brought in, not by any body but as it were with a wind, for she could see no person before her, but only hear voices on every side. After all the services were brought to the table, one came in and sang invisibly, another played on the harp, but she saw no man. The harmony of the instruments did so greatly shrill in her ears that (though there were no manner of person) yet seemed she in the midst of a multitude of people.

All these pleasures finished, when night approached Psyche went to bed : and when she was

laid, and the sweet sleep came upon her, she greatly feared for her virginity because she was alone. Then came her unknown husband and lay with her : and after that he had made a perfect consummation of the marriage, he rose in the morning before day and departed.

Soon after came her invisible servants, presenting to her such things as were necessary, and thus she passed forth a great while : and (as it happened) the novelty of the things by continual custom did increase her pleasure, but specially the sound of the instruments was a comfort to her being alone.

During this time that Psyche was in this place of pleasures, her father and mother did nothing but weep and lament, and her two sisters, hearing of her most miserable fortune, came with great dolour and sorrow to comfort and speak with their parents.

The night following Psyche's husband spoke to her (for she might feel his eyes, his hands and his ears) and said, " O my sweet spouse and dear wife, fortune doth menace to thee imminent peril and danger, whereof I wish thee greatly to beware. For know thou that thy sisters, thinking that thou art dead, be greatly troubled, and are come to the mountain by thy steps ; whose lamentations if thou fortune to hear, beware that thou do in no wise either make answer or look up towards them. For if thou do, thou shalt purchase to me great sorrow, and to thyself utter destruction." Psyche, hearing her husband, was contented to do all things as he commanded.

After he was departed, and the night passed

away, Psyche lamented and cried all the day following, thinking that now she was past all hope of comfort, in that she was closed within the walls of a prison, deprived of human conversation, and commanded not to aid or assist her sorrowful sisters, no, nor once to see them. Thus she passed all the day in weeping, and went to bed at night without any refection of meat or bath.

Incontinently after came her husband, who (when he had embraced her sweetly) said, "Is it thus that you perform your promise, my sweet wife? What do I find here? Pass you all the day and the night in weeping? And will you not cease in your husband's arms? Go to, do what you will, purchase your own destruction, and when you find it so, then remember my words, and repent, but too late."

Then she desired her husband more and more, assuring him that she should die unless he would grant that she might see her sisters, whereby she might speak with them and comfort them.

At length he was contented, and moreover he willed that she should give them as much gold and jewels as she would; but he gave her a further charge, saying, "Beware that ye covet not (being moved by the pernicious counsel of your sisters) to see the shape of my person, lest by your curiosity you be deprived of so great and worthy estate." Psyche being glad herewith, rendered to him most entire thanks, and said, "Sweet husband, I had rather die than to be separate from you; for whosoever you be, I love

and retain you within my heart, as if you were my own spirit or Cupid himself. But I pray you grant this likewise, that you would command your servant Zephyrus to bring my sisters down into the valley, as he brought me." Wherewithal she kissed him sweetly, and desired him gently to grant her request, calling him her spouse, her sweetheart, her joy and her solace, whereby she enforced him to agree to her mind ; and when morning came he departed away.

After long search made, the sisters of Psyche came to the hill where she was sat on the rock, and cried with a loud voice, in such sort that the stones answered again. And when they called their sister by her name, so that their lamentable cries came to her ears, she came forth, and said, " Behold, here is she for whom you weep ; I pray you torment yourselves no more, cease your weeping."

And at once she commanded Zephyrus by the appointment of her husband to bring them down. Neither did he delay, for with gentle blasts he retained them up, and laid them softly in the valley.

I am not able to express the often embracing, kissing and greeting which was between them three ; all sorrows and tears were then laid apart.

" Come in " (quoth Psyche), " into our house, and refresh your afflicted minds with your sister." After this she showed them the storehouses of treasure, she caused them to hear the voices which served her, the bath was ready, the meats were brought in.

When they had eaten and filled themselves with divine delicacies, they conceived great envy within their hearts, and one of them, being very curious, demanded what her husband was, of what state, and who was the lord of so precious a house. But Psyche, remembering the promise which she made to her husband, feigned that he was a young man, of comely stature, with a flaxen beard, and had great delight in hunting in the hills and dales by. And lest by her long talk she should be found to trip or fail in her words, she filled their laps with gold, silver and jewels, and commanded Zephyrus to carry them away.

When they were brought up to the mountain, they took their ways homeward to their own houses, and murmured with envy that they bore against Psyche, saying, "Behold, cruel and contrary fortune, behold how we (born all of one parent) have divers destinies, but especially we, that are the elder two, be married to strange husbands, made as handmaidens, and as it were banished from our country and friends, whereas our younger sister hath so great abundance of treasure, and got a god to her husband, who hath no skill how to use so great plenty of riches : saw you not, sister, what was in the house ? What great store of jewels, what glittering robes, what gems, what gold we trod on ? If she have a husband according, as she affirmeth, there is none that liveth this day more happy in all the world than she. And so it may come to pass that at length for the great affection and love which he

may bear to her, he may make her a goddess, for (by Hercules) such was her countenance, so she behaved herself, that (as a goddess) she had voices to serve her, and the winds did obey her. But I, poor wretch, have first married a husband older than my father, more bald than a coot, more weak than a child, and one that locks me up all day in the house."

Then said the other sister, "And in faith I am married to a husband that hath the gout twofold, crooked, not courageous in paying my debt; I am fain to rub and mollify his stony fingers with divers sorts of oils, and to wrap them in plasters and salves, so that I soil my white and dainty hands with the corruption of filthy clouts, not using myself like a wife, but more like a servant: and you, my sister, seem likewise to be in bondage and servitude, wherefore I cannot abide to see our younger sister in such great felicity. Saw you not, I pray, how proudly and arrogantly she handled us even now? and how in vaunting herself she uttered her presumptuous mind, how she cast a little gold into our lap, and (being weary of our company) commanded that we should be borne and blown away? Verily, I live not nor am a woman, but I will deprive her of all her bliss. And if you, my sister, be so far bent as I, let us consult together, and not utter our mind to any person, no, nor yet to our parents, nor tell that ever we saw her. For it sufficeth that we have seen her, whom it repenteth to have seen: neither let us declare her good fortune to our

father, nor to any other, since as they seem not happy whose riches are unknown, so shall she know that she hath sisters, no abjects, but more worthier than she. But no, let us go home to our husbands and poor houses, and when we are better instructed let us return to suppress her pride."

This evil counsel pleased these two evil women, and they hid the treasure which Psyche gave them, and tore their hair, renewing their false and forged tears. When their father and mother beheld them weep and lament still, they doubled their sorrows and griefs, but full of ire and farced with envy they took their voyage homeward, devising the slaughter and destruction of their sister.

In the mean season the husband of Psyche warned her again in the night with these words, "Seest thou not" (quoth he) "what peril and danger evil fortune doth threaten to thee, whereof if thou take not good heed it will shortly come upon thee: for the unfaithful harlots do greatly endeavour to set their snares to catch thee, and their purpose is to make and persuade thee to behold my face, which if thou once fortune to see (as I have often told) thou shalt see no more. Wherefore if these naughty hags, armed with wicked minds, do chance to come again (as I think no otherwise but that they will), take heed that thou talk not with them, but simply suffer them to speak what they will. Howbeit, if thou canst not restrain thyself, beware that thou have

no communication of thy husband, nor answer a word if they fortune to question of me. So will we increase our stock, and this young and tender child, couched in thy womb, if thou conceal my secrets, shall be made an immortal god, but otherwise a mortal creature."

Then Psyche was very glad that she should bring forth a divine babe, and very joyful in that she should be honoured as a mother. But those pestilent and wicked furies, breathing out their serpentine poison, took shipping to bring their enterprise to pass.

Then Psyche was warned again by her husband in this sort, "Behold, the last day, the extreme case, and the enemies of thy blood have armed themselves against us, pitched their camps, set their host in array, and are marching towards us; for now thy two sisters have drawn their swords, and are ready to slay thee. O with what force are we assailed this day! O sweet Psyche, I pray thee to take pity on thyself of me, and deliver thy husband and this infant from so great danger. See not, neither hear, these cursed women, which are not worthy to be called thy sisters, for their great hatred and breach of sisterly amity, for they will come like sirens to the mountain, and yield out their piteous and lamentable cries."

When Psyche had heard these words she sighed sorrowfully, and said, "O dear husband, this long time you have had experience and trial of my faith, and doubt you not but that I will persevere in the same. Wherefore command your

wind Zephyrus that he may do as he hath done before, to the intent that if you have charged me not to behold your venerable face, yet that I may comfort myself with the sight of my sisters'. I pray you by these beautiful ears, by these round cheeks, delicate and tender, by your pleasant white breast, whose shape and face I shall learn at length by my child, grant the fruit of my desire, refresh your dear spouse Psyche with joy, who is bound and linked to you for ever. I little esteem to see your visage and figure, little do I regard the night and darkness thereof, for you are my only light."

Her husband (being as it were enchanted with these words, and compelled by violence of her often embracing, wiping away her tears with his hair) yielded to his wife. And when morning came he departed as he was accustomed to do.

Now her sisters arrived on land, and never rested till they came to the rock, without visiting of their father and mother, and leaped down rashly from the hill themselves. Then Zephyrus according to the divine commandment brought them down (though it were against his will) and laid them in the valley without any harm. At once they went into the palace to their sister without leave, and when they had eftsoons embraced their prey, and thanked her (with flattering words) for the treasure which she gave them, they said, "O dear sister Psyche, know you that you are now no more a child but a mother? How happy shall we be that shall see this infant

nourished amongst so great plenty of treasure? That if he be like his parents, as it is necessary he should, there is no doubt but a new Cupid shall be born."

By this kind of means they went about to win Psyche by little and little. Because they were weary with travel, they sat them down in chairs, and after they had washed their bodies in baths they went into a parlour, where all kinds of meats were ready prepared. Psyche commanded one to play with his harp; it was done. Then immediately another sang, others tuned their instruments, but no person was seen. By their sweet harmony and modulation the sisters of Psyche were greatly delighted.

Howbeit the wickedness of these cursed women was nothing suppressed by the sweet noise of these instruments, but they settled themselves to work their treason against Psyche, demanding who was her husband, and of what parentage. Then she (having forgotten, by too much simplicity, that which she had spoken before of her husband) invented a new answer, and said that her husband was of a great province, a merchant and a man of middle age, having his beard interspersed with grey hairs; which when she had said (because she would have no further talk) she filled their laps full of gold and silver, and bid Zephyrus to bear them away.

In their return homeward they murmured with themselves, saying, "How say you, sister, to so apparent a lie of Psyche's? For first she said

that her husband was a young man of flourishing years and had a flaxen beard, and now she saith that it is half grey with age ; what is he that in so short space can become so old ? You shall find it no otherwise, my sister, but that either this cursed quean hath invented a great lie, or else that she never saw the shape of her husband. And if it be so that she never saw him, then verily she is married to some god, and hath a young god in her ; but if it be a divine babe and fortune to come to the ears of my mother (as God forbid it should), then may I go and hang myself ; wherefore let us go to our parents, and with forged lies let us colour the matter.”

After they were thus inflamed and had visited their parents, they returned again to the mountain, and by the aid of the wind Zephyrus were carried down into the valley, and after they had strained their eyelids to enforce themselves to weep, they called to Psyche in this sort. “Thou (ignorant of so great evil) thinkest thyself sure and happy, and sittest at home nothing regarding thy peril, whereas we go about thy affairs, and are careful lest any harm should happen to thee, for we are credibly informed, neither can we but utter it to thee, that there is a great serpent full of deadly poison, with a ravenous and gaping throat, that lieth with thee every night. Remember the oracle of Apollo, who pronounced that thou shouldst be married to a dire and fierce serpent ; and many of the inhabitants here by and such as hunt about in the country affirm that they saw

him yesternight returning from pasture and swimming over the river, whereby they do undoubtedly say that he will not pamper thee long with delicate meats, but when the time of delivery shall approach, he will devour both thee and thy child. Wherefore advise thyself whether thou wilt agree to us that are careful for thy safety, and so avoid the peril of death, and be contented to live with thy sisters, or whether thou wilt remain with the serpent, and in the end be swallowed into the gulf of his body. And if it be so that thy solitary life, thy conversation with voices, this servile and dangerous pleasure and the love of the serpent do more delight thee, say not but that we have played the parts of natural sisters in warning thee."

Then the poor and simple wretch Psyche was moved with the fear of so dreadful words, and (being amazed in her mind) did clean forget the admonitions of her husband and her own promises made to him. And (throwing herself headlong into extreme misery) with a wan and sallow countenance, scantily uttering a third word, at length spoke in this sort, "O my most dear sisters, I heartily thank you for your great kindness towards me, and I am now verily persuaded that they who have informed you hereof have informed you of nothing but truth, for I never saw the shape of my husband, neither know I from whence he came ; only I hear his voice in the night, insomuch that I have an uncertain husband and one that loveth not the light of the

day, which causeth me to suspect that he is a beast as you affirm. Moreover I do greatly fear to see him, for he doth menace and threaten great evil to me if I should go about to spy and behold his shape. Wherefore, my loving sisters, if you have any wholesome remedy for your sister in danger, give it now presently."

Then they, opening the gates of their subtle minds, put away all privy guile, and egged her forward in her fearful thoughts, persuading her to do as they would have her. One of them began, and said, "Because we little esteem any peril or danger to save your life, we intend to show you the best way and means as we may possibly do. Take a sharp razor and put it under the pillow of your bed, and see that you have ready a privy burning lamp with oil, hid under some part of the hanging of the chamber, and (finely dissimulating the matter) when (according to his custom) he comes to bed and sleeps soundly, arise you secretly, and with your bare feet go and take your lamp, with the razor in your right hand, and with valiant force cut off the head of the poisonous serpent. We will aid and assist you, for when by the death of him you shall be made safe, we will marry you to some comely man."

After they had thus inflamed the heart of their sister (fearing lest some danger might happen to them by reason of their evil counsel), they were carried by the wind Zephyrus to the top of the mountain, and so they ran away, and took shipping.

When Psyche was left alone (saving that she seemed not to be alone, being stirred by so many furies) she was in a tossing mind, like the waves of the sea, and although her will was obstinate and resisted to put in execution the counsel of her sisters, yet she was in doubtful and divers opinions touching her calamity. Sometime she would, sometime she would not, sometime she is bold, sometime she fears, sometime she mistrusts, sometime she is moved, sometime she hates the beast, sometime she loves her husband ; but at length the night came, and she made preparation for her wicked intent.

Soon after, her husband came, and when he had kissed and embraced her, he fell asleep. Then Psyche (somewhat feeble in body and mind, yet given strength by cruelty of fate) received boldness and brought forth the lamp, and took the razor. So by her audacity she changed her kind, but when she took the lamp and came to the bedside, she saw the most meek and sweetest beast of all beasts, even fair Cupid couched fairly, at the sight of whom the very lamp increased his light for joy, and the razor turned his edge. But when Psyche saw so glorious a body, she greatly feared, and (amazed in mind, with a pale countenance, all trembling) fell on her knees, and thought to hide the razor, yea, verily, in her own heart, which she had undoubtedly done, had it not (through fear of so great an enterprise) fallen out of her hand.

When she saw and beheld the beauty of his

divine visage she was well recreated in her mind. She saw his hairs of gold, that yielded out a sweet savour : his neck more white than milk, his purple cheeks, his hair hanging comely behind and before, the brightness whereof darkened the light of the lamp, his tender plume feathers dispersed upon his shoulders like shining flowers, and trembling hither and thither, and the other parts of his body so smooth and soft that it did not repent Venus to bear such a child. At the bed's feet lay his bow, quiver and arrows, the weapons of so great a god. When Psyche curiously beheld them, marvelling at the weapons of her husband, she took one of the arrows out of the quiver and pricked herself withal, and was so grievously wounded that the blood followed. Thereby of her own accord she added love upon love. Then more and more broiling in the love of Cupid, she embraced him and kissed him a thousand times, fearing the measure of his sleep.

But alas ! while she was in this great joy, whether it were for envy or for desire to touch this amiable body likewise, there fell out a drop of burning oil from the lamp upon the right shoulder of the god.

O rash and bold lamp, the vile ministry of love, how darest thou be so bold as to burn the god of all fire, whenas he invented thee to the intent that all lovers might with more joy pass the nights in pleasure ? The god being burned in this sort, and perceiving that promise and faith were broken, fled away without utterance of any word from the

eyes and hands of his most unhappy wife. But Psyche fortun'd to catch him (as he was rising) by the right thigh, and held him fast as he flew above in the air, until such time as (constrained by weariness) she let go and fell down upon the ground. But Cupid followed her down, and lighted upon the top of a cypress tree, and angrily spoke to her in this manner, "O simple Psyche, consider with thyself how I (little regarding the commandment of my mother, who willed me that thou shouldst be married to a man of base and miserable condition) came myself from heaven to love thee, and wounded my own body with my proper weapons to have thee to my spouse ; and did I seem a beast to thee, that thou shouldst go about to cut off my head with a razor, who loved thee so well ? Did not I always give thee in charge ? Did not I gently will thee to beware ? But those cursed aiders and counsellors of thine shall be worthily rewarded for their pains. As for thee, thou shalt be sufficiently punished by my absence."

When he had spoken these words he took his flight into the air. Then Psyche fell flat on the ground, and as long as she could see her husband she cast her eyes after him into the air, weeping and lamenting piteously. But when he was gone out of sight she threw herself into the nearest running river, for the great anguish and dolour that she was in for the lack of her husband. But the water would not suffer her to be drowned, but took pity upon her, in honour of Cupid, who was

accustomed to broil and burn the river itself, and so, being afraid, threw her upon the bank amongst the herbs.

Then Pan, the rustical god, sitting on the river-side, embracing and teaching the mountain goddess Echo to tune her songs and pipes, by whom were feeding the young and tender goats, when he perceived Psyche in so sorrowful case, not ignorant (I know not by what means) of her miserable estate, endeavoured to pacify her in this sort, "O fair maid, I am a rustic and rude herdsman, howbeit (by reason of my old age) expert in many things. As far as I can learn by conjecture, which (according as wise men term it) is called divination, I perceive by your uncertain gait, your pale hue, your sobbing sighs and your watery eyes that you are greatly in love. Wherefore hearken to me, and go not about to slay yourself, nor weep at all, but rather adore and worship the great god Cupid, and win him to you by your gentle promise of service."

When the god of shepherds had spoken these words, she gave no answer, but made reverence to him as to a god, and so departed.

But after Psyche had gone a little way, she fortun'd (unawares) to come to a city where the husband of one of her sisters dwelt, which when Psyche understood, she caused her sister to have knowledge of her coming. So they met together, and after great embracing and salutation, the sister demanded the cause of her travel thither.

"Marry" (quoth she), "do not you remember

the counsel that you gave me, whereby you would that I should kill the beast who under colour of my husband did lie with me every night? Understand that as soon as I brought forth the lamp to see and behold his shape, I perceived that he was the son of Venus, even Cupid himself. Then I (being stricken with great pleasure, and desirous to embrace him) could not thoroughly assuage my delight; but alas (by evil chance), the boiling oil of the lamp fortun'd to fall on his shoulder, which caused him to awake, and (seeing me armed with fire and weapon) he said, 'How darest thou be so bold to do so great a mischief? Depart from me, and take such things as thou didst bring: for I will have thy sister (and named you) to my wife, and she shall be placed in thy felicity.' And immediately he commanded Zephyrus to carry me away from the bounds of his house."

Psyche had scarcely finished her tale, but her sister (pierced with the prick of desire and wicked envy) ran home, and (feigning to her husband that she had heard word of the death of her parents) took shipping and came to the mountain. And although there blew a contrary wind, yet, being brought in a vain hope, she cried, "O Cupid, take me, a more worthy wife, and thou, Zephyrus, bear down thy mistress." So she cast herself down headlong from the mountain. But she fell not into the valley neither alive nor dead, for all the members and parts of her body were torn amongst the rocks, whereby she was

made a prey to the birds and wild beasts, as she worthily deserved.

Neither was the vengeance of the other delayed, for Psyche, travelling in that country, fortunèd to come to another city, where her other sister dwelt, and when she had declared all such things as she told to her first sister, she ran likewise to the rock and was slain in like sort.

Then Psyche travelled about in the country to seek her husband Cupid, but he was gotten into his mother's chamber, and there bewailed the sorrowful wound which he had caught by the oil of the burning lamp.

Then the white bird, the gull, which swims on the waves of the water, flew towards the ocean-sea, where she found Venus washing and bathing herself : to whom she declared that her son was burned and in danger of death, and moreover that it was a common bruit in the mouth of every person (who spoke evil of all the family of Venus) that her son did nothing but haunt harlots in the mountain, and that she herself was wont lasciviously to riot on the sea, whereby they say that there is now no more graciousness, no pleasantry, no gentle ways, but uncivil, monstrous and horrible : moreover, the marriages are not for any amity, or for love of children, but full of envy, discord and debate.

This the curious gull did clatter in the ears of Venus, reprehending her son. But Venus began to cry, and said, "What, hath my son gotten any love? I pray thee (gentle bird that dost serve me

so faithfully) tell me what she is, and what is her name, who has troubled my son in such sort, whether she be any of the nymphs, of the number of the goddesses, of the company of the Muses, or of the mystery of my Graces?"

To whom the bird answered, "Madam, I know not what she is, but this I know, that she is called Psyche."

Then Venus with indignation cried out, "What! is it she—the usurper of my beauty, the vicar of my name? What! did he think that I was a bawd, by whom he fell acquainted with the maid?"

Immediately she departed, and went to her chamber, where she found her son wounded as it was told to her. When she beheld him she cried out in this sort, "Is this an honest thing? Is this honourable to thy parents? Is this reason, that thou hast violated and broken the commandment of thy mother and sovereign mistress? Whereas thou shouldst have vexed my enemy with loathsome love, thou hast done contrary. Being but of tender and unripe years thou hast with too licentious appetite embraced my most mortal foe, to whom I shall be made a mother, and she a daughter. Thou presumest and thinkest (thou trifling boy, thou varlet, and without all reverence) that thou art most worthy and excellent, and that I am not able by reason of my age to have another son; which if I might have, thou shouldst well understand that I would bear a more worthier than thee. But to work thee a greater

despite, I do determine to adopt one of my servants, and to give him these wings, this fire, this bow and these arrows, and all other furniture which I gave to thee—not for this purpose, neither is anything given thee of thy father for this intent, but thou hast been evil brought up and instructed in thy youth. Thou hast thy hands ready and sharp. Thou hast often offended thy ancients and especially me that am thy mother. Thou hast pierced me with thy darts, thou contemnest me as a widow, neither dost thou regard thy valiant and invincible father ; and to anger me more, thou art amorous of wenches and harlots. But I will cause that thou shalt shortly repent thee, and that this marriage shall be dearly bought. To what a point am I now driven ? What shall I do ? Whither shall I go ? How shall I repress this beast ? Shall I ask aid of my enemy Sobriety, whom I have often offended to engender thee, or shall I seek for counsel of every poor and rustical woman ? No, no ! Yet had I rather die. Howbeit, I will not cease my vengeance—to her must I have recourse for help, and to none other : I mean to Sobriety, who may correct thee sharply, take away thy quiver, deprive thee of thy arrows, unbend thy bow, quench thy fire, and (which is more) subdue thy body with punishment. When I have cut off this thy hair, which I have dressed with my own hands, and made to glitter like gold, and when I have clipped thy wings which I myself have caused to burgeon, then shall I think to

have sufficiently revenged myself upon thee, for the injury which thou hast done."

When she had spoken these words, she departed in a great rage out of her chamber. But immediately, as she was going away, came Juno and Ceres demanding the cause of her anger.

Then Venus made answer, "Verily you are come to comfort my sorrow, but I pray you with all diligence to seek out one whose name is Psyche, who is a vagabond, and runneth about the countries. I think you are not ignorant of the bruit of my son Cupid, and of his demeanour, which I am ashamed to declare."

Then they, understanding and knowing the whole matter, endeavoured to mitigate the ire of Venus in this sort: "What is the cause, madam, or how hath your son so offended that you should so greatly accuse his love and blame him by reason that he is amorous? And why should you seek the death of her whom he doth fancy? We most humbly entreat you to pardon his fault, if he have accorded to the mind of any maiden. What, do not you know that he is a young man, or have you forgotten of what years he is? Doth he seem always to you to be a child? You are his mother, and a kind woman; will you continually search out his dalliance? Will you blame his luxury? Will you bridle his love? And will you reprehend your own art and delights in him? What god or man is he, that can endure that you should sow or disperse your seed of love in every place, and to make a restraint thereof

within your own doors? Certes, you will be the cause of the suppression of the public places of young dames."

In this sort these goddesses endeavoured to pacify her mind, and to excuse Cupid with all their power (although he were absent), for fear of his darts and shafts of love. But Venus would in no wise assuage her heat, but (thinking that they did rather trifle and taunt at her injuries) she departed from them, and took her voyage towards the sea in all haste.

Here ends the Fifth Book of Lucius Apuleius.





THE SIXTH BOOK OF
LUCIUS APULEIUS OF
THE GOLDEN ASS



THE SIXTH BOOK OF LUCIUS APULEIUS OF THE GOLDEN ASS

*XXII.—The most pleasant and delectable tale of
the marriage of Cupid and Psyche*

IN the mean season Psyche hurled herself hither and thither, to seek for her husband, the rather because she thought that if he would not be appeased with the sweet flattery of his wife, yet he would take mercy upon her at her servile and continual prayers. And, espying a church on the top of a high hill, she said, "What can I tell whether my husband and master be there or no?"

She went quickly thitherward, and with great pain and travail, moved by hope, after she had climbed to the top of the mountain, she came to the temple and went in.

Behold, she espied sheaves of corn lying in a heap, blades writhed like garlands, and reeds of barley; moreover she saw hooks, scythes, sickles and other instruments to reap. But everything lay out of order, and as it were cast in by the hands of labourers; which when Psyche saw, she gathered up and put everything duly in order, thinking that she would not despise or contemn

the temples of any of the gods, but rather get the favour and benevolence of them all.

By and by Ceres came in, and beholding her busy and curious in her chapel, cried out afar off, and said, "O Psyche, needful of mercy, Venus searcheth for thee in every place to revenge herself and to punish thee grievously; but thou hast more mind to be here, and carest for nothing less than for thy safety."

Then Psyche fell on her knees before her, watering her feet with her tears, wiping the ground with her hair, and with great weeping and lamentation desired pardon, saying, "O great and holy goddess, I pray thee by thy plenteous and liberal right hand, by thy joyful ceremonies of harvest, by the secrets of thy sacrifice, by the flying chariots of thy dragons, by the tillage of the ground of Sicily, which thou hast invented, by the marriage of Proserpina, by the diligent inquisition of thy daughter, and by the other secrets which are within the temple of Eleusis in the land of Athens, take pity on me thy servant Psyche, and let me hide myself a few days amongst these sheaves of corn until the ire of so great a goddess be past, or until I be refreshed of my great labour and travail."

Then answered Ceres, "Verily, Psyche, I am greatly moved by thy prayers and tears, and desire with all my heart to aid thee. But if I should suffer thee to be hidden here, I should incur the displeasure of my cousin, with whom I have made a treaty of peace, and an ancient

promise of amity. I advise thee to depart hence, and take it not in evil part that I will not suffer thee to abide and remain within my temple."

Then Psyche, driven away contrary to her hope, was doubly afflicted with sorrow, and so she returned back again. And behold, she perceived afar off in a valley a temple standing within a forest, fair and curiously wrought. Minding to overpass no place whither better hope did direct her, and to the intent she would desire the pardon of every god, she approached nigh to the sacred doors. She saw there precious riches and vestments engraven with letters of gold, hanging upon branches of trees and the posts of the temple, testifying the name of the goddess Juno, to whom they were dedicated.

She kneeled down upon her knees, and embracing the altar with her hands, and wiping her tears, began to pray in this sort: "O dear spouse and sister of the great god Jupiter, which art adored among the great temples of Samos, called upon by women with child, worshipped at high Carthage, because thou wert brought from heaven by the Lion, the rivers of the flood Inachus do celebrate thee, and know that thou art the wife of the great god and the goddess of goddesses. All the East part of the world hath thee in veneration, all the world calleth thee Lucina. I pray thee to be my advocate in my tribulations. Deliver me from the great danger which pursues me, and save me that am wearied with so long labours and sorrow; for I know

that it is thou that succourest and helpest such women as are with child and in danger."

Then Juno, hearing the prayers of Psyche, appeared to her in all her royalty, saying, " Certes, Psyche, I would gladly help thee, but I am ashamed to do anything contrary to the will of my daughter-in-law, Venus, whom always I have loved as my own child ; moreover, I shall incur the danger of the law entitled *De servo corrupto*, whereby I am forbidden to retain any servant fugitive against the will of his master."

Then Psyche, cast off likewise by Juno, as without all hope of the recovery of her husband, reasoned with herself in this sort, " Now what comfort or remedy is left to my afflictions, when my prayers will nothing avail with the goddesses ? What shall I do ? Whither shall I go ? In what cave or darkness shall I hide myself to avoid the anger of Venus ? Why do I not take a good heart, and offer myself with humility to her whose anger I have wrought ? What do I know whether he whom I seek be in the house of his mother or no ? "

Being thus, in doubt, poor Psyche prepared herself to her own danger, and devised how she might make her orison and prayer to Venus.

After Venus was weary with searching by sea and land for Psyche, she returned toward heaven, and commanded that one should prepare her chariot, which her husband Vulcan gave to her by reason of marriage, so finely wrought that neither gold nor silver could be compared to the

brightness thereof. Four white pigeons guided the chariot with great diligence, and when Venus was entered in, a number of sparrows flew chirping about, making sign of joy, and all other kind of birds sang sweetly, foreshowing the coming of the great goddess. The clouds gave place, the heavens opened and received her joyfully, the birds that followed nothing feared the eagles, hawks and other ravenous fowls in the air.

Incontinently she went to the royal palace of the god Jupiter, and with a proud and bold petition demanded the service of Mercury in certain of her affairs ; whereunto Jupiter consented.

Then with much joy she descended from heaven with Mercury, and gave him an earnest charge to put in execution her words, saying, " O my brother, born in Arcadia, thou knowest well that I, who am thy sister, did never enterprise to do anything without thy presence. Thou knowest also how long I have sought for a girl and cannot find her. Wherefore there resteth nothing else save that thou with thy trumpet do pronounce the reward to such as take her. See thou put in execution my commandment, and declare that whatsoever he be that retains her, wittingly, against my will, shall not defend himself by any means or excusation."

When she had spoken thus, she delivered to him a libel wherein was contained the name of Psyche and the residue of his publication ; which done she departed away to her lodging.

At once, Mercury (not delaying the matter) proclaimed throughout all the world that whatsoever he were that could tell any tidings of a king's fugitive daughter, the servant of Venus, named Psyche, should bring word to Mercury, and for reward of his pains he should receive seven sweet kisses of Venus.

After Mercury had pronounced these things, every man was inflamed with desire to search out Psyche ; and this proclamation was the cause that put away all doubt from Psyche. But she was scarcely come in sight of the house of Venus, when one of her servants, called Custom, came out, and espying Psyche, cried with a loud voice, saying, " O wicked harlot as thou art, now at length thou shalt know that thou hast a mistress above thee ! What, dost thou make thyself ignorant, as though thou didst not understand what travail we have taken in searching for thee ? I am glad that thou art come into my hands. Thou art now in the gulf of hell, and shalt abide the pain and punishment of thy great contumacy." And therewithal she took her by the hair, and brought her in before the presence of Venus.

When Venus espied her she began to laugh, and as angry persons accustom to do, she shook her head and scratched her right ear, saying, " O goddess, goddess, you are now come at length to visit your mother, or else to see your husband, that is in danger of death by your means. Be you assured I will handle you like a daughter. Where be my maidens Sorrow and Sadness ? "

When they came, she delivered Psyche to be cruelly tormented. Then they fulfilled the commandment of their mistress, and after they had piteously scourged her with whips and rods, they presented her again before Venus, who began to laugh again, saying, "Behold, she thinketh to move me to pity, and to make me a grandmother to her child! Am not I happy that in the flourishing time of all my age I shall be called a grandmother, and the son of a vile harlot shall be accounted the grandson of Venus? Howbeit, I am a fool to term him by the name of a son, since the marriage was made between unequal persons, in the fields, without witnesses, and not by the consent of their parents; wherefore it is illegitimate, and the child that shall be born a bastard, if we fortune to suffer thee to live till thou be delivered."

When Venus had spoken these words she leaped upon the face of poor Psyche, and tearing her apparel, took her violently by the hair, and dashed her head upon the ground. Then she took a great quantity of wheat, barley, millet, poppy seed, pease, lentils and beans, and mingled them all together in a heap, saying, "Thou evil-favoured girl, thou seemest unable to get the grace of thy lover by no other means than by diligent and painful service, wherefore I will prove what thou canst do. See that thou separate all these grains one from another, disposing them orderly in their quality, and let it be done before night."

When she had appointed this task to Psyche, she departed to a great banquet that was prepared that day. But Psyche went not about to dis sever the grain (as being a thing impossible to be brought to pass, by reason it lay so confusedly scattered), but being astonished at the cruel commandment of Venus, sat still and said nothing.

Then the little pismire, the emmet, taking pity on her great difficulty and labour, cursing the cruelty of the wife of Jupiter and of so evil a mother, ran about hither and thither, and called to her all the ants of the country, saying, "I pray you, my friends, ye quick sons of the ground, the mother of all things, take mercy on this poor maid espoused to Cupid, who is in great danger of her person. I pray you help her with all diligence."

Incontinently one came after another, dis severing and dividing the grain, and after they had put each kind of corn in order, they ran away again in all haste.

When night came, Venus returned home from the banquet well tippled with wine, smelling of balm, and crowned with garlands of roses. When she espied what Psyche had done, she said, "This is not the labour of thy hands, but rather of his that is amorous of thee." Then she gave her a morsel of brown bread, and went to sleep.

In the mean season Cupid was closed fast in the most surest chamber of the house, partly because he should not hurt himself with wanton dalliance, and partly because he should not speak with his

love. So these two lovers were divided one from another.

When night was passed, Venus called Psyche and said, "Seest thou yonder forest that extends out in length with the river? There be great sheep shining like gold, and kept by no manner of person. I command thee that thou go thither and bring me home some of the wool of their fleeces."

Psyche arose willingly, not to do her commandment, but to throw herself headlong into the water to end her sorrow.

But a green reed, inspired by divine inspiration, with a gracious tune and melody spoke to her and said, "O Psyche, I pray thee not to trouble or pollute my water by the death of thee. Yet beware that thou go not towards the terrible sheep of this coast, until such time as the heat of the sun be past, for when the sun is in his force, then seem they most dreadful and furious, with their sharp horns, their stony foreheads, and their gaping throats, wherewith they arm themselves to the destruction of mankind. Until the mid-day is past and the heat assuaged, and until they have refreshed themselves in the river, thou mayst hide thyself here by me under this great plane tree; and as soon as their great fury is past, thou mayst go among the thickets and bushes under the woodside and gather the locks of their golden fleeces, which thou shalt find hanging upon the briers."

Thus spoke the gentle and benign reed, showing

a means to Psyche to save her life, which she bore well in memory, and with all diligence went and gathered up such locks as she found, and put them in her apron, and carried them home to Venus.

But the danger of this second labour did not please her, nor give her sufficient witness of the good service of Psyche, and with a sour resemblance of laughter she said, "Of certainty I know that this is not thy act, but I will prove if thou be of so stout a courage and singular prudence as thou seemest. Seest thou the top of yonder great hill, from whence there runneth down water of black and deadly colour, which nourisheth the floods of Styx and Cocytus? I charge thee to go thither and bring me a vessel of that water." Wherewithal she gave her a bottle of crystal, menacing and threatening her rigorously.

Then poor Psyche went in all haste to the top of the mountain, rather to end her life than to fetch any water. When she was come up to the ridge of the hill, she perceived that it was impossible to bring it to pass; for she saw a great rock gushing out most horrible fountains of waters, which ran down and fell by many stops and passages into the valley beneath. On each side she saw great dragons, stretching out their long and bloody necks, that never slept, but were appointed to keep the river there. The waters themselves had voices, saying, "Away, away, what wilt thou do? Fly, fly, or else thou wilt be slain."

Then Psyche, seeing the impossibility of this affair, stood still as though she were transformed into a stone, and although she was present in body, yet was she absent in spirit and sense, by reason of the great peril which she saw, insomuch that she could not comfort herself with weeping, such was the present danger that she was in.

But the royal bird of great Jupiter, the eagle, remembering his old service which he had done when, led by Cupid, he brought up the boy Ganymede to the heavens, to be made the butler of Jupiter, and minding to show the like service in the person of the wife of Cupid, came from the high house of the skies, and said to Psyche, "O simple woman, without all experience, dost thou think to get or dip up any drop of this dreadful water? No, no, assure thyself thou art never able to come nigh it, for the gods themselves do greatly fear at the sight thereof. What, have you not heard that it is a custom among men to swear by the puissance of the gods, and the gods do swear by the majesty of the river Styx? But give me thy bottle."

And suddenly he took it, and filled it with the water of the river, and taking his flight through those cruel and horrible dragons brought it to Psyche.

She, very joyful thereof, presented it to Venus, who would not yet be appeased, but menacing more and more, said, "What, thou seemest to me a very witch and enchantress, that bringest these things to pass. Howbeit thou shalt do one thing

more. Take this box and go to hell to Proserpina, and desire her to send me a little of her beauty, as much as will serve me the space of one day, and say that such as I had is consumed away since my son fe'll sick. But return again quickly, for I must dress myself therewithal, and go to the theatre of the gods."

Then poor Psyche perceived the end of all her fortune, thinking verily that she should never return, and not without cause, since she was compelled to go to the gulf and furies of hell. Wherefore, without any further delay, she went up to a high tower to throw herself down headlong, thinking that it was the nearest and readiest way to hell. But the tower (as inspired) spoke to her, saying, "O poor wretch, why goest thou about to slay thyself? Why dost thou rashly yield to thy last peril and danger? Know thou that if thy spirit be once separate from thy body, thou shalt surely go to hell, but never to return again, wherefore hearken to me. Lacedæmon, a city of Greece, is not far hence. Go thou thither and inquire for the hill Tænarus, where thou shalt find a hole leading to hell, even to the palace of Pluto. But take heed that thou go not with empty hands to that place of darkness, but carry two sops sodden in the flower of barley and honey in thy hands, and two halfpence in thy mouth, and when thou hast passed a good part of that way, thou shalt see a lame ass carrying wood, and a lame fellow driving him, who will desire thee to give him up the sticks that fall down. But

pass thou on and do nothing. By and by thou shalt come to the river of hell, where Charon is ferryman. He will first have his fare paid him before he will carry the souls over the river in his boat. Whereby you may see that avarice reigneth amongst the dead; neither Charon nor Pluto will do anything for nought. For if it be a poor man that would pass over, and lacketh money, he will be compelled to die in his journey before they will show him any relief. Wherefore deliver to the vile Charon one of the halfpence which thou bearest, for thy passage, and let him receive it out of thy mouth. And it shall come to pass as thou sittest in the boat thou shalt see an old man swimming on the top of the river holding up his deadly hands, and desiring thee to receive him into the bark. But have no regard to his piteous cry. When thou art passed over the flood thou shalt espy old women spinning, who will desire thee to help them; but beware thou do not consent to them in any case, for these and like baits and traps will Venus set, to make thee let fall one of thy sops. And think not that the keeping of thy sops is a light matter, for if thou lose one of them thou shalt be assured never to return again to this world. Then thou shalt see a great and marvellous dog with three heads barking continually at the souls of such as enter in, by reason he can do them no other harm. He lieth day and night before the gate of Proserpina, and keepeth the house of Pluto with great diligence. But if thou cast him one of thy sops thou mayst have access to

Proserpina without danger. She will make thee good cheer, and entertain thee with delicate meat and drink. But sit thou upon the ground and desire brown bread, and then declare thy message to her ; and when thou hast received such beauty as she giveth, in thy return appease the rage of the dog with thy other sop, and give thy other halfpenny to covetous Charon, and come the same way again into the world as thou wentest. But above all things have a regard that thou look not in the box, neither be too curious about the treasure of the divine beauty."

In this manner the tower spoke to Psyche, and advertised her what she should do. And immediately she took two halfpence, two sops and all things necessary, and went to the mountain Tænarus to go towards hell.

After Psyche had passed by the lame ass, paid her halfpenny for passage, neglected the old man in the river, denied to help the women spinning, and filled the ravenous mouth of the dog with a sop, she came to the chamber of Proserpina. There Psyche would not sit in any royal seat, nor eat any delicate meats, but kneeling at the feet of Proserpina, only contented with coarse bread, declared her message ; and after she had received a mystical secret in the box she departed, and stopped the mouth of the dog with the other sop, and paid the boatman the other halfpenny.

When Psyche was returned from hell, to the light of the world, she was ravished with great

desire, saying, "Am not I a fool that, knowing I carry here the divine beauty, I will not take a little thereof to garnish my face, to please my lover withal?"

Immediately she opened the box, but she could perceive no beauty nor anything else save only an infernal and deadly sleep, which immediately invaded all her members as soon as the box was uncovered, in such sort that she fell down on the ground, and lay there as a sleeping corpse.

But Cupid, being now healed of his wound and malady, not able to endure the absence of Psyche, got him secretly out at a window of the chamber where he was enclosed, and (receiving his wings) took his flight towards his loving wife. When he had found her, he wiped away the sleep from her face, and put it again into the box, and awaked her with the tip of one of his arrows, saying, "O wretched caitiff, behold thou wert well-nigh perished again with thy overmuch curiosity! Well, go thou, and do thy message to my mother, and in the mean season I will provide for all things accordingly." Wherewith he took his flight into the air, and Psyche brought her present to Venus.

In the mean season, Cupid, being more and more in love with Psyche, and fearing the displeasure of his mother, did pierce into the heavens, and arrived before Jupiter to declare his cause. Then Jupiter, after he had eftsoons embraced him, spoke in this manner, "O my well-beloved son, although thou hast not given due reverence and honour to me as thou oughtest to do, but hast

rather soiled and wounded this my breast (whereby the laws and order of the elements and planets be disposed) with continual assaults of terrene luxury and against all laws, and the discipline Julia,¹ and the utility of the public weal, in transforming my divine beauty into serpents, fire, savage beasts, birds, and into bulls ; howbeit, remembering my modesty, and that I have nourished thee with my own proper hands, I will do and accomplish all thy desire, so that thou canst beware of spiteful and envious persons. And if there be any excellent maiden of comely beauty in the world, remember yet the benefit which I shall show to thee, by recompense of her love towards me again."

When he had spoken these words, he commanded Mercury to call all the gods to council, and if any of the celestial powers did fail of appearance, he should be condemned in ten thousand pounds : which sentence was such a terror to all the gods that the high theatre was replenished, and Jupiter began to speak in this sort : " O ye gods, registered in the books of the Muses, you all know this young man Cupid, whom I have nourished with my own hands, and the raging flames of whose first youth I thought best to bridle and restrain. It sufficeth in that he is defamed in every place for his adulterous living, so that all occasion thereof ought to be taken away by means of marriage. He hath chosen a maiden that fancieth him well ; let him have her still and possess her

¹ The Julian Law—against adultery.—ED.

according to his own pleasure." Then he returned to Venus, and said, "And you, my daughter, take you no care, neither fear you the dishonour of your progeny and estate, neither have regard in that it is a mortal marriage, for it seemeth to me just, lawful and legitimate by the law civil."

Incontinently after, Jupiter commanded Mercury to bring up Psyche, the spouse of Cupid, into the palace of heaven. And then he took a pot of immortality, and said, "Hold, Psyche, and drink to the end thou mayst be immortal, and that Cupid may be thy everlasting husband."

At once the great banquet and marriage-feast was sumptuously prepared, and Cupid sat down with his dear spouse between his arms: Juno likewise with Jupiter, and all the other gods in order; Ganymede filled the pot of Jupiter, and Bacchus served the rest. Their drink was nectar, the wine of the gods. Vulcan prepared supper, the Hours decked up the house with roses and other sweet smells, the Graces threw about balm, the Muses sang with sweet harmony; Apollo tuned pleasantly to the harp, Venus danced finely, Pan and the Satyrs played on their pipes.

And thus Psyche was married to Cupid, and afterwards she was delivered of a child, whom we call Pleasure.

This the trifling old woman declared to the captive maiden, and I, poor ass, not standing far

off, was not a little sorry in that I lacked pen and ink to write so worthy a tale.

*XXIII.—How Apuleius carried away the gentle-
woman, and how they were taken again by the
thieves, and what kind of death was
invented for them*

BY and by the thieves came home laden with treasure, and many of them which were of strongest courage (leaving behind such as were lame and wounded, to heal and air themselves) said they would return back again to fetch the rest of their pillage, which they had hidden in a certain cave. So they snatched up their dinner greedily, and brought us forth into the way, and beat us before them with staves.

About night (after we had passed over many hills and dales) we came to a great cave, where they loaded us with mighty burdens, and would not suffer us to refresh ourselves any season, but brought us again in our way, and hied so fast homeward that, what with their haste and their cruel stripes, I fell down upon a stone by the high-way side. Then they beat me pitifully in lifting me up, and hurt my right thigh and my left hoof, and one of them said, "What shall we do with this lame evil-favoured ass that is not worth the meat that he eats?"

Another said, "Since the time that we had him first he never did any good, and I think he came to our house with evil luck, for we have had great

wounds since, and loss of our valiant captains." Another said, "As soon as he has brought home his burden I will surely throw him out upon the mountain to be a prey for wild beasts."

While these gentlemen reasoned together of my death, we fortun'd to come home, for the fear that I was in caus'd my feet to turn into wings. After we were discharged of our burdens, they went to their fellows that lay wounded and told them our great tardity and slowness by the way.

I was brought into no small anguish when I perceived my death prepared before my face, and said to myself, "Why standest thou still, Lucius? Why dost thou not look for thy death? Knowest thou not that the thieves have ordained to slay thee? Seest thou not these sharp and pointed flints which shall bruise and tear thee in pieces if by adventure thou happen upon them? Thy gentle magician has not only given thee the shape and gait of an ass, but also a skin so soft and tender as it were a swallow's. Why dost thou not take courage and run away to save thy life? Art thou afraid of the old woman, who is more than half dead, and whom with a stripe of thy heel thou mayst easily dispatch? But whither shall I fly? What lodging shall I seek? Behold my assy cogitation: who is he that passeth by the way and will not take me up."

While I devised these things I broke the halter wherewith I was tied and ran away with all my force. Howbeit I could not escape the kitish eyes of the old woman, for she ran after me and,

with more audacity than becomes her kind and age, caught me by the halter and thought to pull me home.

But I, not forgetting the cruel purpose of the thieves, was moved with small pity, for I kicked her with my hinder heels to the ground, and had well-nigh slain her. Yet although she was thrown and hurled down, she held still the halter and would not let me go. She cried with a loud voice and called for succour ; but she little prevailed, because there was no person that heard her, save only the captive gentlewoman, who, hearing the voice of the old woman, came out to see what the matter was, and, perceiving her hanging at the halter, took a good courage and wrested it out of her hands, and, entreating me with gentle words, got upon my back.

Then I began to run, and she gently kicked me forward, whereof I was nothing displeased, for I had as great a desire to escape as she ; insomuch that I seemed to scour away like a horse. And when the gentlewoman spoke I would answer her with my neighing, and oftentimes (under colour to rub my back) I would sweetly kiss her tender feet.

Then she, fetching a sigh from the bottom of her heart, lifted up her eyes to the heavens, saying, " O sovereign gods, deliver me, if it be your pleasure, from these present dangers. And thou, cruel fortune, cease thy wrath ; let the sorrow suffice thee which I have already sustained. And thou, little ass, that art the occasion

of my safety and liberty, if thou canst once render me safe and sound to my parents, and to him who so greatly desires to have me to his wife, thou shalt see what thanks I will give thee, with what honour I will reward thee, and how I will use thee. First, I will bravely dress the hairs of thy forehead, and then I will finely comb thy mane ; I will tie up thy rugged tail trimly, I will deck thee round about with golden traps, in such sort that thou shalt glitter like the stars of the sky. I will bring thee daily in my apron the kernels of nuts, and will pamper thee up with dainty delicacies. I will set store by thee, as by one that is the preserver of my life. Finally, thou shalt lack no manner of thing. Moreover, amongst thy glorious fare, thy great ease, and the bliss of thy life thou shalt not be destitute of dignity, for thou shalt be chronicled perpetually in memory of my present fortune, and the providence divine. All the whole history shall be painted upon the wall of our house. Thou shalt be renowned throughout all the world. And it shall be registered in the books of doctors that an ass saved the life of a young maiden that was captive amongst thieves. Thou shalt be numbered amongst the ancient miracles. We believe that by like example of truth, Phryxus saved himself from drowning upon a ram, Arion escaped upon a dolphin, and that Europa was delivered by a bull. If Jupiter transformed himself into a bull, why may it not be that under shape of this ass is hidden the figure of a man, or some power divine ? ”

While the virgin did thus sorrowfully unfold her desires, we fortun'd to come to a place where three ways met, and she took me by the halter and would have me turn on the right hand to her father's house ; but I, knowing that the thieves were gone that way to fetch the residue of their pillage, resisted with my head as much as I might, saying within myself, "What wilt thou do, unhappy maid ? Why wouldst thou go so willingly to hell ? Why wilt thou run into destruction by means of my feet ? Why dost thou seek thy own harm and mine likewise ? "

While we two strove together which way we might take, the thieves returned laden with their prey, and perceived us afar off by the light of the moon.

After they had knowledge of us, one of them said, "Whither go you so hastily ? Be you not afraid of spirits ? And you, you harlot, do you go to see your parents ? Come on, we will bear you company."

Therewithal they took me by the halter and drove me back again, beating me cruelly with a great staff that they had, full of knobs. Then I, returning again to my ready destruction, and remembering the grief of my hoof, began to shake my head and to wax lame. But he that led me by the halter said, "What, dost thou stumble ? Canst thou not go ? These rotten feet of thine can run well enough, but they cannot walk. Thou couldst mince it finely even now with the gentlewoman, that thou didst seem to pass the

horse Pegasus in swiftness." With these words, they so beat me again that they broke a great staff upon me.

When we were come almost home, we saw the old woman hanging upon a bough of a cypress tree. Then one of them cut down the bough whereon she hung, and cast her into the bottom of a great ditch. After this they bound the maiden and fell greedily to their victuals, which the miserable old woman had provided for them.

They began to devise with themselves of our death, and how they might be revenged. Divers were the opinions of this divers number. The first said that he thought best the maid should be burned alive. The second said she should be thrown to wild beasts ; the third that she should be hanged upon a gibbet ; and the fourth that she should be flayed alive.

Thus was the death of the poor maiden scanned between those four. But one of the thieves, after every man had declared his judgement, spoke in this manner : " It is not convenient to the oath of our company to suffer you to wax more cruel than the quality of the offence merits. I would that she should not be hanged, nor burned, nor thrown to beasts, nor die any sudden death, but by my counsel I would have her punished according to her desert. You know well what you have determined already of this dull ass, that eats more than he is worth, that feigns lameness, and that was the cause of the flying away of the maid. My mind is that he shall be slain to-morrow, and

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when all the guts and entrails of his body are taken out, let the maid be sewn into his belly. Then let us lay them upon a great stone against the broiling heat of the sun. So they shall both sustain all the punishments which you have ordained ; for first, the ass shall be slain as you have determined, and she shall be torn and gnawed with wild beasts, when she is bitten and rent with worms ; she shall endure the pain of the fire, when the broiling heat of the sun shall scorch and parch the belly of the ass ; she shall abide the gallows when the dogs and vultures shall have her body hanging in their ravenous mouths. I pray you number all the torments which she shall suffer."

This being said, all the thieves consented to the sentence ; and when I, poor ass, heard and understood all their device, I did nothing else save bewail and lament my dead carcass, which should be handled in such sort on the next morrow.

Here ends the Sixth Book of Lucius Apuleius.



THE SEVENTH BOOK OF
LUCIUS APULEIUS OF
THE GOLDEN ASS



THE SEVENTH BOOK OF LUCIUS APULEIUS OF THE GOLDEN ASS

*XXIV.—How he that was left behind at Hypata,
to bring news concerning the robbery of
Milo's house, came home and declared
to his companions that all the fault
was laid to one Apuleius'
charge*

AS soon as night was past, and the clear chariot of the sun had spread his bright beams on every coast, came one of the company of the thieves (for so his and their greeting together did declare), who at his first entry into the cave (after he had breathed himself, and was able to speak) told these tidings to his companions: "Sirs, as touching the house of Milo of Hypata, which we forcibly entered and ransacked the last day, we may put away all fear, and doubt nothing at all, for after by force and arms you had spoiled and taken away all things in the house, and so returned hither to our cave, I (thrusting in amongst the press of the people and showing myself as though I were sad and sorrowful for the mischance) consulted with them

for the bolting out of the matter, and devised what means might be wrought for the apprehension of the thieves, to the intent I might learn and see all that was done, to make relation thereof to you as you willed me. The whole act at length, by manifest and evident proofs, as also by the common opinion and judgement of all the people, was laid to one Lucius Apuleius' charge, as manifest author of this committed robbery. A few days before, by false and forged letters and coloured honesty, he fell so far in favour with this Milo that he entertained him in his house, and received him as chief of his familiar friends. But Lucius, after he had sojourned there a good space, and won the heart of Milo's maid by feigned love, thoroughly learnt the ways and doors of all the house, and curiously viewed the coffers and chests, wherein was laid the whole substance of Milo. Neither was the cause small which was given to judge him culpable, since the very same night that this robbery was done he fled away, and could be found in no place ; and to the intent he might clean escape, and better prevent such as made hue and cry after him, he took his white horse and galloped away. After this his servant was found in the house, and, being accused as accessory to the felony and escape of his master, was committed to the common gaol, and the next day following was cruelly scourged and tormented till he was well-nigh dead, to the intent he should confess the matter. But when they could wrest or learn no such thing of him, they yet sent many

persons afterwards towards Lucius' country to inquire him out, and so to take him prisoner."

As he declared these things I greatly lamented with myself to think of my old and pristine estate, and what felicity I was sometimes in, in comparison to the misery that I presently sustained, being changed into a miserable ass. Then had I no small occasion to remember how the old and ancient writers feigned and affirmed that Fortune was stark blind and without eyes, because she always bestows her riches upon evil persons and fools, and chooses or favours no mortal person by judgement, but is always conversant especially with such as, if she could see, she should most shun and forsake; yea, and that which is even worse, she sows such evil or, rather, contrary opinions in men, that the wicked glory with the name of good, and contrary, the good and innocent be detracted and slandered as evil. Furthermore, I, who by her great cruelty was turned into a four-footed ass, in most vile and abject manner, yea, and whose estate seemed worthily to be lamented and pitied of the most hard and stony hearts, was accused of theft and robbing of my dear host Milo, which villainy might rather be called parricide than theft. Yet might not I defend my own cause, nor deny the fact any way, by reason I could not speak.

Howbeit, lest my conscience should seem to accuse me by reason of silence, and again being enforced by impatience, I endeavoured to speak, and fain would have said, "Never did I that act."

And verily, the first word, "Never," I cried out once or twice somewhat handsomely, but the residue I could in no wise pronounce, but still remaining in one voice cried, "Never, never, never." Howbeit, I settled my hanging lips as round as I could to speak the residue: but why should I further complain of the cruelty of Fortune, since she was not ashamed that my servant and my horse should be likewise accused with me of the robbery?

While I pondered with myself all these things, a greater care came to my remembrance, touching the death which the thieves devised for me and the maiden, and as I looked down to my belly, I thought of the poor gentlewoman that should be closed within me.

As I thought thus, the thief who a little before had brought the false news against me drew out of the skirt of his coat a thousand crowns, which he had rifled away from such as he met, and cast it into the common treasury. Then he carefully inquired how the residue of his companions did. It was declared that the most valiant were murdered and slain in divers manners; whereupon he persuaded them to remit all their affairs a certain season, and to seek for other fellows to be in their places, that by the exercise of new lads the terror of their martial band might be reduced to the old number; assuring them that such as were unwilling might be compelled by menaces and threatenings, and such as were willing might be encouraged forward with reward. Further, he

said that there were some who, seeing the profit which they had, would forsake their base and servile estate, and rather be contented to live like tyrants amongst them. Moreover, he declared that for his part he had spoken with a certain tall man, a valiant companion, but of young age, stout in body, and courageous in fight, whom he had fully persuaded to exercise his idle hands, dull with slothfulness, to his greater profit, and (while he might) receive the bliss of better fortune, and not to hold out his sturdy arm to beg for a penny, but rather to take as much gold and silver as he would.

Then everyone consented that he that seemed so worthy to be their companion should be one of their company, and that they would search for others to make up the residue of the number.

Thereupon he went out, and soon returning again, brought in a tall young man (as he promised), to whom none of the residue might be compared, for he was higher than they by a head, and of more bigness in body, and his beard had begun to burgeon. But he was poorly appavelled, insomuch that you might see all his belly naked.

As soon as he was entered in, he said, "God speed you, soldiers of Mars, and my faithful companions! I pray you make me one of your band, and I will ensure you that you shall have a man of singular courage and lively audacity, for I had rather receive stripes upon my back than money or gold in my hands : and as for death (which

every man fears) I pass nothing at all. Yet think you not that I am an abject or a beggar, neither judge you my virtue and prowess by my ragged clothes, for I have been a captain of a great company, and subdued all the country of Macedonia. I am the renowned thief Hæmus the Thracian, whose name all countries and nations do so greatly fear. I am the son of Theron, the notable thief, nourished with human blood, entertained amongst the stoutest. Finally, I am inheritor and follower of my father's virtues. Yet I lost in a short time all my company and all my riches by one assault which I made upon a factor of the prince, who had been captain of two hundred men, for fortune was clean against me.¹ Hearken, and I will tell you the whole matter. There was a certain man in the court of the Emperor who had many offices, and was in great favour. But at last by the envy of divers persons he was banished away and compelled to forsake the court. His wife Platina, a woman of rare faith and singular shamefastness, having borne ten children to her husband, despised all worldly pomp and delicacy, and determined to follow her husband, and to be a partaker of all his perils and danger. Wherefore she cut off her hair, disguised herself like a man, and took with her all her treasure, passing through the hands of the soldiers and the naked swords without any fear. Thereby she endured many miseries, and was partaker of much affliction to

¹ The text is obscure here, and Adlington seems to mistranslate; but the main sense is clear.—ED.

save the life of her husband, so great was the love she bore to him.

“When they had escaped many perilous dangers as well by land as by sea they went towards Zacynthus, to continue there according as fortune had appointed. But when they arrived on the sea coast of Actium (where we in our return from Macedonia were roving about), when night came they turned into a house, not far distant from their ship. Here they lay all night. Then we entered in and took away all their substance, but verily we were in great danger, for the good matron, perceiving us incontinently by the noise of the gate, went into the chamber, and called up every man by his name, and likewise the neighbours that dwelt round about, inasmuch that by reason of the fear that everyone was in, we hardly escaped away.

“But this most holy woman, faithful and true to her husband (as the truth must be declared), returned to Cæsar, desiring his aid and puissance, and demanding vengeance of the injury done to her husband. Cæsar granted all her desire, and then went my company to wrack, inasmuch that every man was slain, so great was the authority and word of the prince. But when all my band was lost and taken by search of the Emperor’s army, I only stole away and delivered myself from the violence of the soldiers, for I clothed myself in a woman’s attire, and mounted upon an ass that carried barley sheaves (passing through the middle of them all) I escaped away, because

everyone deemed that I was a woman, by reason I lacked a beard.

“Howbeit, I left not off for all this, nor did degenerate from the glory of my father, or my own virtue, but freshly coming from the bloody skirmish, and disguised like a woman, I invaded towns and castles alone to get some prey.”

Therewithal he pulled out two thousand crowns which he had under his coat, saying, “Hold here the dowry which I present to you; hold eke my person, which you shall always find trusty and faithful, if you will willingly receive me. And I will ensure you that, in so doing, within short space I will make and turn this stony house of yours into gold.”

Then immediately everyone consented to make him their captain, and so they gave him better garments and threw away his old. When he had changed his attire he embraced them one after another. Then placed they him in the highest room of the table, and so drank to him in token of good luck.

XXV.—How the death of the ass and the gentlewoman was stayed

AFTER supper they began to talk, and declared to him the going away of the gentlewoman; and how I bore her upon my back, and what death was ordained for us two. Then he desired to see her, whereupon the gentlewoman was brought forth fast bound. But as soon as he

beheld her, he turned himself, wringing his nose, and blamed them, saying, "I am not so much a beast or so rash a fellow that I would drive you quite from your purpose; but my conscience will not suffer me to conceal anything that touches your profit, since I am careful for you. But if my counsel do displease you, you may at your own liberty proceed in your enterprise. I doubt not but all thieves, and such as have a good judgement, will prefer their own lucre and gain above all things in the world, and above their vengeance, which purchases damage to divers persons. Therefore, if you put this virgin in the ass's belly, you shall but execute your indignation against her without all manner of profit. I would advise you to carry the virgin to some town and sell her. Such a brave girl as she is may be sold for a great quantity of money. I myself know certain slave merchants, amongst whom, peradventure, some one will give us great sums of gold for her. This is my opinion touching this affair. But advise you what you intend to do, for you may rule me in this case."

In this manner the good thief pleaded and defended our cause, being a good patron to the virgin and to me, poor ass. But they stayed hereupon a good space with long deliberation, which made my heart (God wot) and spirit greatly to quail. Howbeit, in the end they consented to his opinion, and immediately the maiden was unloosed of her bonds.

Seeing the young man, and hearing the name

of markets and slave merchants, she began to wax joyful, and smiled with herself.

Then began I to deem evil of the generation of women, when I saw this maiden, who was appointed to be married to a young gentleman, and who so greatly desired the same, now delighted with the talk of a wicked traffic, and other things dishonest. In this sort the nature and manners of all women hung upon the judgement of an ass.

*XXVI.—How all the thieves were brought
in a sleep by their new companion*

THEN the young man spoke again, saying, "Masters, why go we not about to make our prayers to Mars touching this selling of the maiden, and to seek for other companions? But as far as I see here is no manner of beast to make sacrifice withal, nor wine sufficient for us to drink. Let me have" (quoth he) "ten more with me, and we will go to the nearest inn, to provide for meat and other things necessary."

So he and ten more with him went their way. In the mean season the residue made a great fire, and an altar with green turfs, in the honour of Mars.

Soon after they came again, bringing with them bottles of wine and a great number of beasts, amongst which there was a big ram goat, fat, old and hairy, which they killed and offered to Mars. Then supper was prepared sumptuously. And



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the new companion said to the others, "You ought to account me not only your captain in robbery and fight, but also in your pleasures and jollity."

Thereupon with pleasant cheer he prepared meat, and trimming up the house he set all things in order, and brought the pottage and dainty dishes to the table. But above all he plied them well with great pots and jugs of wine. Sometimes (seeming to fetch somewhat) he would go to the maiden and give her pieces of meat, which he privily took away, and would drink to her, which she willingly took in good part. Moreover, he kissed her twice or thrice, whereof she was well pleased.

But I (not well contented thereat) thought in myself, "O wretched maid, thou hast forgotten thy marriage, and dost esteem this stranger and bloody thief above thy husband, which thy parents ordained for thee; now perceive I well thou hast no remorse of conscience, but more delight to tarry and play the harlot here amongst so many weapons and swords. What, knowest thou not how the other thieves if they knew thy demeanour would put thee to death as they had once appointed, and so work my destruction likewise? Well now I perceive thou hast a pleasure in the damage and hurt of others."

While I angrily devised with myself all these things, I perceived by certain signs and tokens (not ignorant to so wise an ass) that he was not the notable thief Hæmus, but rather Lepolemus, her husband, for after much communication he

began to speak more frankly, not fearing at all my presence, and said, "Be of good cheer, my sweet friend, Charites, for thou shalt have by and by all these thy enemies captive to thee." Then he filled wine to the thieves more and more, and never ceased till they were all overcome with abundance of meat and drink, while he himself abstained and bridled his own appetite: and truly I greatly suspected he had mingled in their cups some deadly poison, for incontinently they all fell down asleep on the ground, one after another, and lay as though they had been dead.

*XXVII.—How the gentlewoman was carried
home by her husband while the thieves
were asleep, and how much Apuleius
was made of*

WHEN the thieves were all asleep by their great and immoderate drinking, the young man, Lepolemus, took the maiden and set her upon my back and went homeward.

When we were nigh come home, all the people of the city (especially her parents, friends and family) came running forth joyfully, and all the children and maidens of the town gathered together to see this virgin in great triumph sitting upon an ass. Then I (willing to show as much joy as I might, as present occasion served) set and pricked up my long ears, I rattled my nostrils, and cried stoutly, nay, rather I made the town to ring again with my shrilling sound.

When we were come to her father's house, she was received into a chamber honourably. As for me, Lepolemus (accompanied by a great number of citizens) drove me back again with other horses to the cave of the thieves, where we found them all asleep lying on the ground as we left them. Then they first brought out all the gold, silver and other treasure of the house, and loaded us withal, which when they had done, they threw many of the thieves down into the bottom of deep ditches, and the residue they slew with their swords. After this we returned home glad and merry of so great vengeance upon them, and the riches which we carried was committed to the public treasury. This done, the maid, whom by so much travail he had valiantly recovered, was married to Lepolemus, according to the law.

Then my good mistress looked about for me, and asking for me, commanded, the very same day of her marriage, that my manger should be filled with barley, and that I should have hay and oats abundantly, and she would call me her little camel. But how greatly did I curse Fotis in that she transformed me into an ass, and not into a dog, because I saw the dogs had filled their paunches with the relics and bones of so worthy a supper !

The next day this new-wedded woman (my mistress) did greatly commend me before her parents and husband for the kindness which I had showed her, and never left off until such time as they promised to reward me with great honours.

Then they called together all their friends, and thus it was concluded. One said that I should be closed in a stable and never work, but continually be fed and fatted with fine and chosen barley and beans, and good litter. Howbeit, another prevailed, who, wishing my liberty, persuaded them that it was better for me to run in the fields amongst the lascivious horses and mares, whereby I might engender some mules for my mistress. Then he that kept the horse was called for, and I was delivered to him with great care, insomuch that I was right pleasant and joyous, because I hoped that I should carry no more fardels or burdens. Moreover, I thought that when I should thus be at liberty, in the spring time of the year, when the meadows and fields were green, I should find some roses in some place, and I was fully persuaded that if my master and mistress rendered to me so many thanks and honours when I was an ass, they would much more reward me being turned into a man.

But when he, to whom the charge of me was so straitly committed, had brought me a good way distant from the city, I perceived no delicate meats nor no liberty which I should have, for by and by his covetous wife and most cursed quean made me a mill ass, and, beating me with a cudgel full of knots, would wring bread for herself and her household out of my skin. Yet was she not contented to weary me and make me a drudge with carriage and grinding of her own corn, but I was hired of her neighbours to bear

their sacks likewise. Howbeit, she would not give me such meat as I should have, nor sufficient to sustain my life withal, for the barley which I ground for my own dinner she would sell to the inhabitants by. And after I had laboured all day, she would set before me at night a little filthy bran, nothing clean, but full of stones.

Being in this calamity, fortune worked me yet other torments, for on a day I was let loose into the fields to pasture, by the commandment of my master. O how I leaped for joy, how I neighed to see myself in such liberty! But especially I beheld many mares which I thought should be my wives and concubines, and I espied out and chose the fairest before I came nigh them. But this my joyful hope turned into utter destruction, for incontinently all the stallions, which were well fed and made strong by ease of pasture, and thereby much more puissant than a poor ass, were jealous of me, and, having no regard to the law and order of the god Jupiter, ran fiercely and terribly against me. One lifted up his fore feet and kicked me spitefully, another turned and with his hinder heels spurned me cruelly, the third, threatening with a malicious neighing, dressed his ears and showing his sharp and white teeth bit me on every side. In like sort have I read in histories how the King of Thrace would throw his miserable guest to be torn in pieces and devoured by his wild horses, so niggish was that tyrant of his provender that he nourished them with the bodies of men.

*XXVIII.—How Apuleius was made a common
ass to fetch home wood, and how he was
handled by a boy*

AFTER I was thus handled by the horses, I was brought home again to the mill ; but behold, fortune (insatiable of my torments) had devised a new pain for me. I was appointed to bring home wood every day from a high hill, and who should drive me thither and home again but a boy that was the veriest hangman in all the world, who was not contented with the great travail that I took in climbing up the hill, neither pleased when he saw my hoofs torn and worn away by sharp flints, but he beat me cruelly with a great staff, insomuch that the marrow of my bones ached for woe. He would strike me continually on my right hip and still in one place, whereby he tore my skin and made of my wide sore a great hole or trench, or rather a window to look out at, and although it ran down with blood, yet would he not cease beating me in that place. Moreover he loaded me with such great trusses and burdens of wood that you would think they had been rather prepared for elephants than for me ; and when he perceived that my wood hung more on one side than another (when he should rather take away the heavy sides, and so ease me, or else lift them up to make them equal with the other) he laid great stones upon the weaker side to remedy the matter. Yet could he not be contented

with this my great misery and immoderate burdens of wood, but when we came to any river (as there were many by the way) he, to save his feet from water, would leap upon my loins likewise, which was no small load upon load. And if by adventure I fell down in any dirty or miry place, when he should have pulled me out either with ropes or lifted me up by the tail, he would never help me, but laid on me from top to toe with a mighty staff, till he had left no hair on all my body, no, not so much as on my ears, whereby I was compelled by force of the blows to stand up.

The same hangman boy invented another torment for me. He gathered a great many sharp thorns, as sharp as needles, and bound them together like a faggot, and tied them at my tail to prick me. Then was I afflicted on every side, for if I had endeavoured to run away the thorns would have pricked me ; if I had stood still the boy would have beaten me, and yet the boy beat me to make me run. Whereby I perceived that the hangman did devise nothing else save to kill me by some manner of means, and he would swear and threaten to do me worse harm, and because he might have some occasion to execute his malicious mind, upon a day (after that I had endured too much for my patience) I lifted up my heels and spurned him well favouredly. Then he invented this vengeance against me. After that he had well loaded me with shrubs and tow, and trussed it round upon my back, he brought

me out into the way. Then he stole a burning coal out of a man's house of the next village, and put it into the middle of the tow. The tow and shrubs being very dry, fell alight, and burned me on every side.

I could see no remedy how I might save myself, and in such a case it was not best for me to stand still: but fortune was favourable towards me, perhaps to reserve me for more dangers, for I espied a great hole full of rain water that fell the day before. Thither I ran hastily and plunged myself therein, in such sort that I quenched the fire and was delivered from that present peril. But the vile boy, to excuse himself, declared to all the neighbours and shepherds about that I willingly tumbled in the fire as I passed through the villages. Then he laughed upon me, saying, "How long shall we nourish and keep this fiery ass in vain."

*XXIX.—How Apuleius was accused of lechery
by the boy*

A FEW days after, this boy invented another mischief; for when he had sold all the wood which I bore to certain men dwelling in a village by, he led me homeward unladen. And then he cried that he was not able to rule me, and that he would not drive me any longer to the hill for wood, saying, "Do you see this slow and dull ass, who besides all the mischiefs that he has wrought already, invents daily more and more.

For when he espies any woman passing by the way, whether she be old or married, or if it be a young child, he will throw his burden from his back and run fiercely upon them, and will bite their faces cruelly, which thing may work us great displeasure, or rather be imputed to us as a crime."

By these and like lies he provoked the shepherds earnestly against me, which grieved me (God wot) full sore that could say nothing.

Then one of the shepherds said, "Why do we not make sacrifice of this common adulterous ass? My son" (quoth he), "let us kill him and throw his guts to the dogs, and reserve his flesh for the labourers' supper. Then let us cast dust upon his skin, and carry it home to our master, and say that the wolves have devoured him."

The boy who was my evil accuser made no delay, but prepared himself to execute the sentence of the shepherd, rejoicing at my present danger. But O how greatly did I then repent that the stripe which I gave him with my heel had not killed him. Then he drew out his sword and made it sharp upon a whetstone to slay me. But another of the shepherds said, "Verily, it is a great offence to kill so fair an ass, and so (by accusation of luxury and lascivious wantonness) to lack his necessary labour and service; whereas otherwise if you would but geld him, he might not only be deprived of his courage, but also become gentle, that we should be delivered from all fear of danger. Moreover, he would be thereby more fat and better in flesh. For I know myself

many asses, as also most fierce horses, that by reason of their wantonness have been most mad and terrible, but when they were gelded have become very gentle and tame, and tractable to all use. Wherefore I would counsel you to geld him. And if you consent thereto, I will by and by, when I go to the next market, fetch my irons and tools for the purpose. And I ensure you after that I have gelded him I will deliver him to you as tame as a lamb."

When I did perceive that I was delivered from death, and reserved to be gelded, I was greatly sorry, insomuch that I sought about to kill myself by some manner of means.

*XXX.—How the boy that led Apuleius to the
fields was slain in the wood*

WHILE I devised with myself in what manner I might end my life, the rope-ripe boy on the next morrow led me to the hill again, and tied me to a bough of a great oak, and in the mean season he took his hatchet and cut wood to load me withal. But behold, there crept out of a cave by, a marvellous great bear, holding out his mighty head, which when I saw, I was suddenly stricken with fear, and (throwing all the strength of my body into my hinder heels) lifted up my strained head and broke the halter wherewith I was tied. Then there was no need to bid me run away, for I scoured not only on foot, but tumbled over the stones and rocks with my body, till I

came into the open fields, to the intent I would escape away from the terrible bear, but especially from the boy that was worse than the bear. Then a certain stranger that passed by the way (espying me alone as a stray ass) took me up and rode upon my back, beating me with a staff, which he bore in his hand, through a blind and an unknown lane, whereat I was nothing displeased, but willingly went forward to avoid the cruel pain which the shepherds had ordained for me. As for the stripes, I was nothing moved, since I was accustomed to be beaten so every day.

But evil fortune would not suffer me to continue in such estate long, for the shepherds (looking about for a cow that they had lost, after they had sought in divers places) fortunèd to come upon us unawares. When they espied and knew me, they would have taken me by the halter ; but he that rode upon my back resisted them, saying, " Good lord masters, what intend you to do ? Will you rob me ? "

Then said the shepherds, " What, thinkest thou that we handle thee otherwise than thou deservest, who has stolen away our ass ? Why dost thou not rather tell us where thou hast hidden the boy whom thou hast slain ? " And therewithal they pulled him down to the ground, beating him with their fists, and spurning him with their feet.

Then he swore to them, saying that he saw no manner of boy, but only found the ass loose and straying abroad, which he took up to the intent he might have some reward for the finding of him,

and to restore him again to his master. "And I would to God" (quoth he) "that this ass could speak as a man, to give witness of my innocence. Then would you be ashamed of the injury which you have done to me."

But reasoning for himself thus, he nothing prevailed, for they tied the halter about my neck, and (maugre his face) pulled me quite away, and led me back again through the woods of the hill to the place where the boy accustomed to resort. And after they could find him in no place, at length they found his body rent and torn in pieces, and his members dispersed in sundry places, which I well knew was done by the cruel bear, and verily I would have told it if I might have spoken; but (which I could only do) I greatly rejoiced at his death, although it came too late. Then they gathered together the pieces of his body and buried them. By and by they laid all the fault to him that was my new master, who took me up by the way, and (bringing him home, fast bound, to their houses) purposed on the next morrow to accuse him of murder, and to lead him before the justices to have judgement of death.

*XXXI.—How Apuleius was cruelly beaten by
the mother of the boy that was slain*

IN the mean season, while the parents of the boy lamented and wept for the death of their son, the shepherd (according to his promise) came with his instruments and tools to geld me.

But one of them said, "Tush, we little esteem the mischief which he did yesterday. Now we are contented that to-morrow we will cut off also his head."

So was it brought to pass that my death was delayed till the next morrow: but what thanks did I give to that good boy, who (being so slain) was the cause of my pardon for one short day.

Howbeit I had no time then to rest myself, for the mother of the boy, weeping and lamenting for his death, attired in mourning vesture, tore her hair and beat her breast, and came presently into the stable, saying, "Is it reason that this careless beast should do nothing all day but hold his head in the manger, filling and bolting his guts with meat, without compassion of my great misery, or remembrance of the pitiful death of his slain master, and, contemning my age and infirmity, think that I am unable to revenge his mischiefs? Moreover, he would persuade me that he were not culpable. Indeed it is a convenient thing to look and plead for safety when the conscience doth confess the offence, as thieves and malefactors accustom to do. But, O good Lord, thou cursed beast, if thou couldst utter the contents of thy own mind, whom (though he were the veriest fool in all the world) mightest thou persuade that this murder was void or without thy fault, when it lay in thy power either to keep off the thieves with thy heels or else to bite and tear them with thy teeth? Couldst not thou (that so often in his lifetime didst spurn and kick

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him) defend him now at the point of death by like means? Yet at least thou shouldst have taken him upon thy back, and so brought him from the cruel hands of thieves. But contrary thou rankest away alone, forsaking thy good master, thy pastor and conductor. Knowest thou not that such as deny their wholesome help and aid to them which lie in danger of death ought to be punished, because they have offended against good manners and the law natural? But I promise thee thou shalt not long rejoice at my harms. Thou shalt feel the smart of thy homicide and offence; I will see what I can do."

Therewithal she unloosed her apron, and bound all my feet together, to the end I might not help myself. Then she took a great bar which accustomed to bar the stable door, and never ceased beating of me till she was so weary that the bar fell out of her hands; whereupon, complaining of the soon faintness of her arms, she ran to her fire and brought a firebrand and thrust it under my tail, burning me continually.

Here ends the Seventh Book of Lucius Apuleius.



THE EIGHTH BOOK OF
LUCIUS APULEIUS OF
THE GOLDEN ASS



CHARITES AT THE TOMB OF LÉPOLEMUS



THE EIGHTH BOOK OF LUCIUS APULEIUS OF THE GOLDEN ASS

*XXXII.—How a young man came and declared
the miserable death of Lepolemus, and his
wife Charites*

ABOUT midnight came a young man who seemed to be one of the family of the good woman Charites, who formerly endured so much misery and calamity with me amongst the thieves. After he had taken a stool and sat down by the fireside in the company of the servants, he began to declare many terrible things that had happened to the house of Charites, saying, "O ye horse-keepers, shepherds and cowherds, you shall understand that we have lost our good mistress, Charites, miserably and by evil adventure; and to the end you may learn and know all the whole matter, I purpose to tell you the circumstance of every point, whereby such as are more learned than I (to whom fortune hath ministered more copious style) may paint it out in paper in the form of a history.

"There was a young gentleman dwelling in the next city, born of good parentage, valiant in

prowess and rich in substance, but very much given and addicted to continual revelling, whereby he fell in company with thieves, and had his hand ready to the effusion of human blood. His name was Thrasillus.

“The matter was this, according to the report of every man. He demanded Charites in marriage. But although he was a man more comely than the residue that wooed her, and also had riches abundantly, yet because he was of evil fame, and a man of wicked manners and conversation, he had the repulse and was put off by Charites, and so she married with Lepolemus. Howbeit this young man secretly loved her, and, moved somewhat at her refusal, he busily searched some means to work his damnable intent. Having found occasion and opportunity to accomplish his purpose, which he had a long time concealed, he brought to pass that the same day that Charites was delivered by the subtle means and valiant audacity of her husband from the puissance of the thieves he mingled himself amongst the assembly, feigning that he was glad of the new marriage and coming home again of the maiden ; whereby (by reason that he came of so noble parents) he was received and entertained in the house as one of their chief and principal friends. Howbeit, under cloak of a faithful wellwisher, he dissimulated his mischievous mind and intent. In continuance of time, by much familiarity, and often conversation and banqueting together, he fell more and more in

favour, like as we see it fortunes to lovers, who first do little delight themselves in love, till by continual acquaintance they kiss and embrace each other.

“Thrasillus, perceiving that it was a hard matter to break his mind secretly to Charites, whereby he was wholly barred from the accomplishment of his luxurious appetite, and on the other side perceiving that the love of her and her husband was so strongly linked together that the bond between them might in no wise be dissevered, moreover it was a thing impossible to ravish her, was still provoked forward by vehement lust when he saw himself unable to bring his purpose to pass. Howbeit, at length the thing which seemed so hard and difficult, through hope of his fortified love, now appeared easy and facile.

“But mark, I pray you, diligently to what end the furious force of his inordinate desire came. On a day Lepolemus went to the chase with Thrasillus to hunt for goats, for his wife Charites desired him earnestly to meddle with no other beasts which were of more fierce and wild nature ; when they were come within the chase to a great thicket fortified about with briers and thorns, they compassed round with their dogs, and beset every place with nets. By and by warning was given to let loose. The dogs rushed in with such a cry that all the forest rang again with the noise. But behold, there leapt out no goat nor deer, nor gentle hind, but a horrible and dangerous wild boar, hard and thick-skinned, bristled terribly

like thorns, foaming at the mouth, grinding his teeth and looking direfully with fiery eyes. The dogs that first set upon him he tore and rent with his tusks, and then he ran quite through the nets and escaped away.

"When we saw the fury of this beast we were greatly stricken with fear, and because we never accustomed to chase such dreadful boars, and further, because we were unarmed and without weapons, we got and hid ourselves under bushes and trees. Then Thrasillus, having found opportunity to work his treason, said to Lepolemus, 'What, stand we here amazed? Why show we ourselves like dastards? Why lose we so worthy a prey with our feminine hearts? Let us mount upon our horses and pursue him incontinently. Take you a hunting staff, and I will take a chasing spear.'

"Instantly they leaped upon their horses and followed the beast. But he, returning against them with furious force, pried with his eyes on whom he might first assail with his tusks. Lepolemus struck the beast first on the back with his hunting staff. Thrasillus, feigning to aid and assist him, came behind, and cut off the hinder legs of Lepolemus' horse, in such sort that he fell down to the ground with his master, and suddenly the boar came upon Lepolemus and furiously tore and rent him with his teeth.

"Howbeit, Thrasillus was not sufficed to see him thus wounded, but when he desired his friendly help he thrust Lepolemus through the right thigh with his spear, the more because he

thought the wound of the spear would be taken for a wound of the boar's teeth. Then he killed the beast likewise.

"When he was thus miserably slain, every one of us came out of our holes and went towards our slain master. But although Thrasillus was joyful of the death of Lepolemus, whom he did greatly hate, yet he cloaked the matter with a sorrowful countenance. He feigned a dolorous face, he often embraced the body which he himself slew; he played all the parts of a mourning person, saving there fell no tears from his eyes. Thus he resembled us in each point, who verily, and not without occasion, had cause to lament for our master, laying all the blame of this homicide to the boar.

"Incontinently after, the sorrowful news of the death of Lepolemus came to the ears of all the family, but especially to Charites, who, after she had heard such pitiful tidings, as a mad and raging woman ran up and down the streets, crying and howling lamentably. All the citizens gathered together, and such as they met bore them company, running towards the chase. When they came to the slain body of Lepolemus, Charites threw herself upon him, weeping and lamenting grievously for his death, in such sort that she would have presently ended her life upon the corpse of her slain husband, whom she so entirely loved, had it not been that her parents and friends comforted her, and pulled her away. The body was taken up, and in funeral pomp brought to the city, and buried.

“ In the mean season Thrasillus feigned much sorrow for the death of Lepolemus, but in his heart he was well pleased and joyful. And to counterfeit the matter, he would come to Charites and say, ‘ O what a loss have I had by the death of my friend, my fellow, my companion Lepolemus : O Charites, comfort yourself, pacify your dolour, refrain your weeping, beat not your breasts.’ And with such other and like words and divers examples he endeavoured to suppress her great sorrow ; but he spoke not this for any other intent but to win the heart of the woman, and to nourish his odious love with filthy delight.

“ Howbeit, Charites, after the burial of her husband, sought the means to follow him, and (not sustaining the sorrows wherein she was wrapped) got her secretly into a chamber and purposed to finish her life there with dolour and tribulation. But Thrasillus was very importunate, and at length brought to pass that at the intercession of the parents and friends of Charites she somewhat refreshed her fallen members with refection of meat and bathing. Howbeit, she did it more at the commandment of her parents than for anything else, for she could in no wise be merry, nor receive any comfort, but tormented herself day and night before the image of her husband, which she had made like to Bacchus, and rendered to him divine honours and services.

“ In the mean season, Thrasillus, not able to refrain any longer, before Charites had assuaged her dolours, before her troubled mind had

pacified her fury, even in the middle of all her griefs, while she wept for her husband, while she tore her garments and rent her hair, demanded her in marriage, and so without shame he detected the secrets and unspeakable deceits of his heart. But Charites detested and abhorred his demand, and as if she had been stricken with some clap of thunder, with some storm, or with the lightning of Jupiter, she presently fell down to the ground all amazed. Howbeit, in the end, when her spirits were revived and she returned to herself, perceiving that Thrasillus was so importunate, she demanded respite to deliberate and to take advice on the matter.

“In the mean season the shape of Lepolemus, who was slain so miserably, appeared to Charites with a pale and bloody face, saying, ‘O my sweet wife (which no other person can say but I), I pray thee for the love which is between us two, if there be any memory of me in thy heart, or remembrance of my pitiful death, marry with any other person so that thou marry not with the traitor Thrasillus. Have no conference with him, eat not with him, lie not with him, avoid the bloody hand of my enemy, couple not thyself with a parricide, for those wounds (the blood whereof thy tears did wash away) were not the wounds of the teeth of the boar, but the spear of Thrasillus deprived me from thee.’

“Thus spoke Lepolemus to his loving wife and declared the residue of the damnable fact. Then Charites, awaking from sleep, began to renew her

dolour, to tear her garments, and to beat her arms with her comely hands. Howbeit she revealed the vision which she saw to no manner of person, but simulating that she knew no part of the mischief, devised with herself how she might be revenged on the traitor, and finish her own life to end and knit up all sorrow.

“Incontinently came Thrasillus, the detestable demander of sudden pleasure, and wearied the closed ears of Charites with talk of marriage; but she, gently refusing his communication, and colouring the matter with a passing craft in the midst of his earnest desires, said, ‘Thrasillus, you shall understand that yet the face of your friend my husband is always before my eyes. I smell yet the cinnamon scent of his precious body, I yet feel Lepolemus alive in my heart. Wherefore you shall do well if you grant to me, miserable woman, necessary time to bewail his death, that after the residue of a few months, the whole year may be expired; which thing touches as well my shame as your wholesome profit, lest peradventure by our speedy and quick marriage we should justly raise and provoke the spirit of my husband to work our destruction.’

“Howbeit, Thrasillus was not contented with this promise, but more and more was earnest upon her, insomuch that she was enforced to speak to him in this manner: ‘My friend Thrasillus, if thou be so contented until the whole year be complete and finished, behold here is my body; take thy pleasure, but in such sort and

so secretly that no servant of the house may perceive it.'

"Then Thrasillus, trusting the false promises of the woman, and preferring his inordinate pleasure above all things in the world, was joyful in his heart and looked for night, when he might have his purpose. 'But come thou about midnight' (quoth Charites), 'disguised, without company. And do but hiss at my chamber door, and my nurse shall attend and let thee in.'

"This counsel pleased Thrasillus marvellously, and (suspecting no harm) he always looked for night, and the hour assigned by Charites. The time was scarce come when (according to her commandment) he disguised himself and went straight to the chamber, where he found the nurse attending for him, who (by the appointment of her mistress) fed him with flattering talk, and gave him mingled and drugged drink in a cup, excusing the absence of her mistress Charites by reason that she attended on her father (being sick), until such time that with sweet talk and operation of the wine he fell into a sound sleep.

"Now when he lay prostrate on the ground ready to all adventure, Charites (being called for) came in, and with manly courage and bold force stood over this sleeping murderer, saying, 'Behold the faithful companion of my husband, behold this valiant hunter, behold my dear spouse! This is the hand which shed my blood, this is the heart which devised so many subtle means to work my destruction, these be the eyes which I have ill

pleased! Behold now they foreshow their own destiny! Sleep careless, dream that thou art in the hands of the merciful, for I will not hurt thee with thy sword or with any other weapon. God forbid that I should slay thee as thou slewest my husband, but thy eyes shall fail thee, and thou shalt see no more than that whereof thou dreamest. Thou shalt think the death of thy enemy more sweet than thy life. Thou shalt see no light, thou shalt lack the aid of a leader, thou shalt not have me as thou hopest, thou shalt have no delight of my marriage, thou shalt not die, and yet living thou shalt have no joy, but wander between light and darkness as an unsure image. Thou shalt seek for the hand that pricked out thy eyes, yet shalt thou not know of whom thou shouldst complain. I will make sacrifice with the blood of thy eyes upon the grave of my husband. But what gainest thou through my delay? Perhaps thou dreamest that thou embracest me in thy arms. Leave off the darkness of sleep, and awake thou to receive a penal deprivation of thy sight. Lift up thy face, regard thy vengeance and evil fortune, reckon thy misery: so pleaseth thy eyes to a chaste woman that thou shalt have blindness to thy companion, and an everlasting remorse of thy miserable conscience.'

"When she had spoken these words she took a great needle from her head and pricked out both his eyes: which done, she caught up the naked sword which her husband Lepolemus accustomed to wear and ran throughout all the

city like a mad woman, towards the sepulchre of her husband.

“Then all we of the house, with all the citizens, ran incontinently after her, to take the sword out of her hands ; but she, clasping about the tomb of Lepolemus, kept us off with her naked weapon, and when she perceived that every one of us wept and lamented, she spoke in this sort : ‘ I pray you, my friends, weep not, nor lament for me, for I have revenged the death of my husband, I have punished deservedly the wicked breaker of our marriage ; now is it time to seek out my sweet Lepolemus, and presently with this sword to finish my life.’

“And therewithal, after she had made relation of the whole matter, declared the vision which she saw, and told by what means she deceived Thrasillus, thrusting the sword under her right breast and wallowing in her own blood, at length with manly courage she yielded up the ghost. Then immediately the friends of miserable Charites did bury her body within the same sepulchre.

“Thrasillus, hearing all the matter, and knowing not by what means he might end his life, for he thought his sword was not sufficient to revenge so great a crime, at length went to the same sepulchre and cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘ O ye dead spirits whom I have so highly offended, receive me ; behold I make sacrifice to you with my body ’ : which said, he closed the sepulchre, purposing to famish himself, and to finish his life there in sorrow.”

These things the young man with pitiful sighs and tears declared to the cowherds and shepherds, which caused them all to weep ; but they, fearing to become subject to new masters, prepared themselves to depart away.

XXXIII.—How Apuleius was led away by the horsekeeper, and what dangers he was in

BY and by the horsekeeper, to whom the charge of me was committed, brought forth all his substance and loaded me and other horses withal, and so departed thence. We bore women, children, pullets, sparrows, kids, whelps and other things which were not able to keep pace with us, and that which I bore upon my back, although it was a mighty burden, yet seemed very light, because I was joyfully fleeing from him that most terribly had appointed to kill me.

When we had passed over a great mountain full of trees, and were come again into the open fields, behold we approached nigh to a fair and rich castle, where it was told to us that we were not able to pass in our journey that night, by reason of the great number of terrible wolves in the country about, so fierce and cruel that they put every man in fear, in such sort that they would invade and set upon those who passed by, like thieves, and devour both them and their beasts.

Moreover, we were advertised that there lay in the way where we should pass many dead bodies, eaten and torn by wolves. Wherefore we were

willed to stay there all night, and on the next morning to go close and round together, whereby we might pass and escape all perils and dangers. But (notwithstanding this good counsel) our caitiff drivers were so covetous to go forward, and so fearful of pursuit, that they never stayed till the morning, but (it being now well-nigh midnight) they made us trudge on our way apace.

Then I, fearing the great danger which might happen, ran amongst the middle of the other horses, to the end I might defend and save my poor buttocks from the wolves, whereat every man much marvelled to see that I scoured away swifter than the other horses. But such my agility was not to get me any praise, but rather for fear. At that time I remembered with myself that the valiant horse Pegasus did fly in the air more to avoid the danger of dreadful Chimera than for anything else.

The shepherds who drove us before them were well armed like warriors. One had a spear, another had a sheephook, some had darts, some clubs, some gathered up great stones, some held up their sharp javelins, and some feared away the wolves with light firebrands. Finally, we lacked nothing to make up an army but only drums and trumpets.

But when we had passed these dangers, not without small fear, we fortunèd to fall into worse, for the wolves came not upon us, either because of the great multitude of our company, or else because of our firebrands, or peradventure they

were gone to some other place, for we could see none. But the inhabitants of the next villages (supposing that we were thieves, by reason of our great multitude), for the defence of their own substance, and for the fear they were in, set great and mighty mastiffs upon us, which they had kept and nourished for the safety of their houses ; who, compassing us round about, leaped on every side, tearing us with their teeth, in such sort that they pulled many of us to the ground. Verily it was a pitiful sight to see so many dogs, some following such as fled, some invading such as stood still, some tearing those which lay prostrate ; but generally there were none which escaped clear.

Behold, upon this another danger ensued. The inhabitants of the town stood in their garrets and windows, throwing great stones upon our heads, that we could not tell whether it were best for us to avoid the gaping mouths of the dogs at hand, or the peril of the stones afar. Amongst them there was one that hurled a great flint upon a woman who sat upon my back, who cried out piteously, desiring her husband to help her. Then he (coming to succour and aid his wife) began to speak in this sort, " Alas, masters, what mean you to trouble us poor labouring men so cruelly ? What mean you to revenge yourselves upon us, that do you no harm ? What think you to gain by us ? You dwell not in caves or dens. You are no barbarous people that you should delight in effusion of human blood."

At these words the tempest of stones did cease, and the storm of the dogs vanished away. Then one (standing on the top of a great cypress tree) spoke to us, saying, "Think you not, masters, that we do this to the intent to rifle or take away any of your goods, but for the safeguard of ourselves and family. Now, a god's name, you may depart away."

So we went forward, some wounded with stones, some bitten with dogs, but generally there was none which escaped free.

*XXXIV.—How the shepherds determined to abide
in a certain wood to cure their wounds*

WHEN we had gone a good part of our way, we came to a certain wood environed with great trees and compassed about with pleasant meadows, where the shepherds appointed to continue a certain space to cure their wounds and sores. Then they sat down on the ground to refresh their weary minds, and afterwards they sought for medicines to heal their bodies. Some washed away their blood with the water of the running river; some stopped their wounds with sponges and clouts. In this manner every one provided for his own safety.

In the mean season we perceived an old man, who seemed to be a shepherd by reason of the goats and sheep that fed round about him. Then one of our company demanded whether he had any milk, butter, or cheese to sell. To whom he

made answer, shaking his head, saying, "Do you look for any meat or drink, or any other refection, here? Know you not in what place you be?" And therewithal he took his sheep and drove them away as fast as he possibly might.

This answer made our shepherds greatly to fear, so that they thought of nothing else but to inquire what country they were in. Howbeit, they saw no manner of person of whom they might demand. At length, as they were thus in doubt, they perceived another old man with a staff in his hand, very weary with travel, who, approaching nigh to our company, began to weep and complain, saying, "Alas, masters, I pray you succour me, miserable caitiff, and restore my nephew to me again, who by following a sparrow that flew before him is fallen into a ditch hereby, and verily I think he is in danger of death. As for me, I am not able to help him out by reason of my old age, but you that are so valiant and lusty may easily help me herein, and deliver me my boy, my heir, and guide of my life."

These words made us all to pity him, and the youngest and stoutest of our company, who alone escaped best the late skirmish of dogs and stones, rose up, demanding in what ditch the boy was fallen. "Marry" (quoth he), "yonder," and pointing with his finger, brought him to a great thicket of bushes and thorn, where they both entered in.

In the mean season, after we had well refreshed ourselves and cured our wounds, we took up our

packs, purposing to depart away. And because we would not go away without the young man, our fellow, the shepherds whistled and called for him. But when he gave no answer they sent one of their company to seek him out, who after a while returned again with a pale face and sorrowful news, saying that he saw a terrible dragon eating and devouring their companion; and as for the old man, he could see him in no place.

When they heard this (remembering likewise the words of the first old man that shook his head and drove away his sheep), they ran away, beating us before them, to fly from this desert and pestilent country.

XXXV.—How a woman killed herself and her child because her husband haunted harlots

AFTER we had passed a great part of our journey we came to a certain village, where we lay all night; but hearken and I will tell you a great mischief that happened there. You shall understand that there was a servant to whom his master had committed the whole government of his house, and was master of the lodging where we lay. This servant had married a maiden of the same house. Howbeit, he was greatly in love with a harlot of the town, and accustomed to resort to her, wherewith his wife was so highly displeased and became so jealous that she gathered together all her husband's substance, with his tallies and books of account, and threw them into a lighted

fire. She was not contented with this, but she took a cord and bound her child, which she had by her husband, about her middle, and cast herself headlong into a deep pit.

The master, taking in evil part the death of these twain, took his servant, who was the cause of this murder by his luxury, and after he had put off all his apparel, he anointed his body with honey, and then bound him sure to a fig tree, where, in a rotten stock, a great number of pismires had built their nests. The pismires, after they had felt the sweetness of the honey, came upon his body, and by little and little (in continuance of time) devoured all his flesh, in such sort that there remained on the tree nothing else save his bare bones.

This was declared to us by the inhabitants of the village there, who greatly sorrowed for the death of this servant. Then we, avoiding likewise from this dreadful lodging, incontinently departed away.

*XXXVI.—How Apuleius was cheapened by
divers persons, and how they looked in
his mouth to know his age*

AFTER this we came to a fair city, very populous, where our shepherds determined to continue, by reason that it seemed a place where they might live unknown, far from such as should pursue them, and because it was a country very plentiful of corn and other victuals.

Here, when we had remained the space of three

days, while I, poor ass, and the other horses were fed and kept in the stable to the intent we might seem more saleable, we were brought out at length to the market, and by and by a crier sounded with his horn to notify that we were to be sold. All my companion horses were bought up by gentlemen, but as for me I stood still, forsaken of all men. And when many buyers came by and looked in my mouth to know my age I was so weary with opening my jaws that at length (unable to endure any longer), when one came with a stinking pair of hands and grated my gums with his filthy fingers, I bit them clean off, which thing caused the standers-by to forsake me, as being a fierce and cruel beast.

The crier, when he had got a hoarse voice with crying, and saw that no man would buy me, began to mock me, saying, "To what end stand we here with this vile ass, this feeble beast, this slow jade with worn hoofs, good for nothing but to make sieves of his skin? Why do we not give him to somebody, for he earneth not his hay?"

In this manner he made all the standers-by to laugh exceedingly; but my evil fortune, which was ever so cruel against me, whom I by travel of so many countries could in no wise escape, did more and more envy me, with invention of new means to afflict my poor body, in giving me another master as spiteful as the rest. There was an old man, somewhat bald, with long and grey hair, one of the number of those who go from door to door throughout all the villages bearing the

image of the goddess Siria, and playing with cymbals to get the alms of good and charitable folk. This old man came hastily towards the crier, and demanded where I was bred.

“Marry” (quoth he), “in Cappadocia.”

Then he inquired what age I was of. The crier answered as a mathematician, which deposed to me my planets, that I was five years old, and willed the old man to look in my mouth, “For I would not willingly” (quoth he) “incur the penalty of the law Cornelia in selling a free citizen for a servile slave. Buy, a god’s name, this fair beast to ride home on, and about in the country.”

But this curious buyer never stinted to question of my qualities, and at length he demanded whether I were gentle or no.

“Gentle” (quoth the crier)? “As gentle as a lamb, tractable to all use. He will never bite, he will never kick, but you would rather think that under the shape of the ass there were some well-advised man.”

Thus the crier mocked the old man. But he, perceiving his taunts and jests, waxed very angry, saying, “Away, doting crier! I pray the omnipotent and omniparent goddess Siria, Saint Sabod, Bellona with her mother Idea, and Venus with Adonis, to strike out both thy eyes that with taunting mocks hast scoffed me in this sort. Dost thou think that I will put a goddess upon the back of any fierce beast, whereby her divine image should be thrown down on the ground, and so I, poor wretch, should be compelled (tearing

my hair) to look for some physician to help her ? ”

When I heard him speak thus, I thought with myself suddenly to leap upon him like a mad ass, to the intent he should not buy me ; but incontinently there came another merchant that prevented my thought, and offered seventeen pence for me.

Then my master was glad, and receiving the money, delivered me to my new master, who was called Philebus ; and he carried his new servant home, and before he came to his house he called out his daughters, saying, “ Behold, my daughters, what a gentle servant I have bought for you ! ”

Then they were marvellous glad, and coming out prattling and shouting for joy thought verily that he had brought home a fit and convenable servant for their purpose. But when they perceived that it was an ass they began to reprove him, saying that he had not bought a servant for his maidens, but rather an ass for himself. “ Howbeit ” (quoth they), “ keep him not wholly for your own riding, but let us likewise have him at commandment.”

Therewithal they led me into the stable and tied me to the manger. There was a certain young man with a mighty body, well skilled in playing on instruments before the goddess to get money, who (as soon as he espied me) entertained me very well, for he filled my rack and manger with meat, and spoke merely,¹ saying,

¹ Openly, plainly.—ED.

“O master ass, you are welcome! Now you shall take my office in hand; you are come to supply my room and to ease me of my miserable labour. But I pray God thou mayst long live and please my master well, to the end thou mayst continually deliver me from so great pain.”

When I heard his words I did prognosticate my misery to come. The day following, I saw there a great number of persons appparelled in divers colours, having painted faces, mitres on their heads, vestments coloured like saffron, surplices of silk, and on their feet yellow shoes, who attired the goddess in a robe of purple, and put her upon my back. Then they went forth with their arms naked to their shoulders, bearing with them great swords and mighty axes, and dancing like mad persons.

After we had passed many small villages, we fortunèd to come to one Britunis' house, where, at our first entry, they began to hurl themselves hither and thither, as though they were mad. They made a thousand gestures with their feet and their heads. They would bite themselves. Finally, every one took his weapon and wounded his arms in divers places. Amongst them there was one more mad than the rest, who sent many deep sighs from the bottom of his heart, as though he had been ravished in spirit, or replenished with divine power. And after that, somewhat returning to himself, he invented and forged a great lie, saying that he had displeased the divine majesty of the goddess by doing of something

which was not convenable to the order of their holy religion, wherefore he would do vengeance of himself. And therewithal he took a whip and scourged his own body, that the blood issued out abundantly, which thing caused me greatly to fear to see such wounds and effusion of blood, lest the same goddess, desiring so much the blood of men, should likewise desire the blood of an ass.

After they were weary with hurling and beating themselves they sat down. And behold, the inhabitants came in and offered gold, silver, vessels of wine, milk, cheese, flour, wheat and other things. Amongst them there was one that brought barley to the ass that carried the goddess ; but the greedy whoresons thrust all into their sack, which they brought for the purpose, and put it upon my back, to the end I might serve for two purposes—that is to say, for the barn by reason of my corn, and for the temple, by reason of the goddess.

In this sort they went from place to place, robbing all the country over. At length they came to a certain castle, purposing to make good cheer there, where, under colour of divination, they brought to pass that they obtained a fat sheep of a poor husbandman for the goddess's supper, and to make sacrifice withal. After the banquet was prepared they washed their bodies and began to discover their beastly customs and inordinate desire of unnatural luxury more than before.

When I beheld this, I could not but attempt to utter my mind and say, " O masters," but I could

pronounce no more but the first letter "O," which I roared out so valiantly that the young men of the town, seeking for a stray ass that they had lost the same night, and hearing my voice, whereby they judged that I had been theirs, entered into the house unawares, and found these persons committing their vile abomination, which, when they saw, they declared to all the inhabitants, by their unnatural villainy mocking and laughing at this the pure and clean chastity of their religion.

In the mean season Philebus and his company (by reason of the bruit which was dispersed throughout all the region there of their beastly wickedness) put all their trumpery upon my back and departed away about midnight. When we had passed a good part of our journey before the rising of the sun we came into a wide desert, where they conspired together to slay me, for after they had taken the goddess from my back and set her gingerly upon the ground they likewise took off my harness and bound me securely to an oak, beating me with their whip in such sort that all my body was mortified. Amongst them there was one that threatened to cut off my legs with his hatchet, because by my noise I defamed his character; but the others, regarding more their own profit than my utility, thought best to spare my life, because I might carry home the goddess. So they loaded me again, driving me before them with their naked swords till they came to a noble city, where the principal patron,

bearing high reverence to the goddess, came in great devotion before us with tympanies, cymbals and other instruments, and received her and all our company with much sacrifice and veneration.

But there, I remember, I thought myself in most danger, for there was one that brought to the master of the house a side of a fat buck for a present, which being hung behind the kitchen door, not far from the ground, was clean eaten up by a greyhound that came in. The cook, when he saw the venison devoured, lamented and wept pitifully. And because supper time approached nigh, when he would be reprov'd of too much negligence, he took a halter to hang himself. But his wife, perceiving whereabout he went, ran incontinently to him, and taking the halter in both her hands stopped him of his purpose, saying, "O husband, are you out of your wits? What intend you to do? See you not a present remedy before your eyes ministered to you by divine providence? I pray you, husband, follow my counsel. Carry this strange ass out into some secret place and kill him, which done, cut off one of his sides, and sauce it well like the side of the buck and set it before your master."

Then the cook, hearing the counsel of his wife, was well pleased to slay me, to save himself, and to bring his purpose to pass he went to the whetstone to sharpen his tools accordingly.



THE NINTH BOOK OF
LUCIUS APULEIUS OF
THE GOLDEN ASS



THE NINTH BOOK OF LUCIUS APULEIUS OF THE GOLDEN ASS

*XXXVII.—How Apuleius saved himself from
the cook by breaking his halter; and of
other things that happened*

IN this manner the traitorous cook prepared himself to slay me; and when he was ready with his knives to do his feat I devised with myself how I might escape the present peril, and I did not long delay, for incontinently I broke the halter wherewith I was tied and, flinging my heels hither and thither to save myself, at length I ran hastily into a parlour where the master of the house was feasting with the priests of the goddess Siria, and disquieted all the company, throwing down their meats and drinks from the table.

The master of the house, dismayed at my great disorder, commanded one of his servants to take me up and lock me in some strong place, to the end I might disturb them no more. But I little regarded my imprisonment, considering that I was happily delivered from the hands of the traitorous cook. Howbeit, fortune, or the fatal

disposition of the divine providence, which neither can be avoided by wise counsel, neither yet by any wholesome remedy, invented a new torment ; for by and by a young lad came running into the parlour, all trembling, and declared to the master of the house that there was a mad dog running about in the streets which had done much harm, for he had bitten many greyhounds and horses in the inn near by ; and he spared neither man nor beast, for there was one Mytilius a muleteer, Ephestio a cook, Hypatavius a chamberlain, and Apollonius a physician, who (thinking to chase away the mad dog) were cruelly wounded by him, insomuch that many horses and other beasts infected with the venom of his poisonous teeth became mad likewise.

This thing caused them all at the table greatly to fear, and thinking that I had been bitten in like sort, they came out with spears, clubs and pitchforks, purposing to slay me, and I had undoubtedly been slain had I not by and by crept into a chamber, where my master intended to lodge that night. Then they closed and locked fast the doors about me, and kept the chamber round, till such time as they thought that the pestilent rage of madness had killed me.

When I was thus shut in the chamber alone I laid me down upon the bed to sleep, considering it was long time past since I lay and took my rest as a man doth. When morning was come, and I was well reposed, I rose up lustily.

In the mean season, they who watched about

the chamber all night reasoned with themselves in this sort, "Verily" (quoth one), "I think the ass be dead." "So think I" (quoth another), "for the outrageous poison of madness hath killed him." But being thus in divers opinions of a poor ass, they looked through a crevice and espied me standing still, sober and quiet, in the middle of the chamber. Then they opened the doors and came towards me to prove whether I were gentle or no.

Amongst them there was one who in my opinion was sent from heaven to save my life. He willed the other to set a basin of fair water before me, that thereby they should know whether I were mad or no, for if I did drink without fear, as I accustomed to do, it was a sign that I was whole and in my assy wits, whereas, contrary, if I did fly and abhor the taste of the water, it was an evident proof of my madness, which thing he said that he had read in ancient and credible books. Thereupon they took a basin of clear water and presented it before me. But I, as soon as I perceived the wholesome water of my life, ran incontinently, and thrusting my head into the basin, drank as though I had been greatly athirst. Then they stroked me with their hands, and bowed my ears, and took me by the halter to prove my patience; and I, taking each thing in good part, disproved their mad presumption by my meekness and gentle behaviour.

When I was thus delivered from this double danger, the next day I was loaded again with the goddess Siria and other trumpery, and was brought

out into the way with trumpets and cymbals, to beg in the villages which we passed by, according to our custom. And after we had gone through a few towns and castles, we fortunèd to come to a certain village, which was built (as the inhabitants there affirmed) upon the foundation of a famous and ancient city. And after we had turned into the next inn we heard of a pretty jest committed in the town there, which I would that you should know likewise.

XXXVIII.—Of the deceits of a woman

THERE was a man dwelling in the town, very poor, who had nought but that which he got by the labour and travail of his hands. His wife was a fair young woman, but very lascivious and given to the appetite and desire of the flesh.

It fortunèd on a day that while this poor man was gone betimes in the morning to the field about his business, according as he accustomed to do, his wife's lover secretly came into his house to have his pleasure with her. And so it chanced that during the time that he and she were busking together, her husband, suspecting no such matter, returned home, praising the chaste continency of his wife ; and he found his doors fast closed, wherefore, as his custom was, he whistled to declare his coming home. Then his crafty wife, ready with present shifts, caught her lover and covered him under a great tub standing in a corner ; and therewithal she opened the door,

blaming her husband in this sort, "Comest thou home so every day with empty hands, and bringest nothing to maintain our house? Thou hast no regard for our profit, neither providest for any meat or drink, whereas I, poor wretch, do nothing day and night but occupy myself with spinning, and yet my travail will scarce find the candles which we spend. O how much more happy is my neighbour Daphne, who eats and drinks at her pleasure, and passeth the time with her amorous lovers according to her desire."

"What is the matter" (quoth her husband)? "Though our master hath made holiday at the fields, yet think not but that I have made provision for our supper? Dost thou not see this tub that keeps a place here in our house in vain, and does us no service? Behold, I have sold it to a good fellow (that is here present) for five pence. Wherefore I pray thee lend me thy hand that I may deliver him the tub."

His wife (having invented a present shift) laughed on her husband, saying, "What merchant, I pray you, have you brought home hither, to fetch away my tub for five pence, for which I, poor woman that sit all day alone in my house, have been proffered so often seven?"

Her husband, being well appaid at her words, demanded what he was that had bought the tub.

"Look" (quoth she), "he is gone under to see whether it be sound or no." Then her lover, under the tub, began to stir and rustle himself, and to the end that his words might agree to the

words of the woman, he said, " Dame, will you have me tell the truth? This tub is rotten and cracked, as to me seemeth, on every side." And then he turned himself to her husband, saying, " I pray you, honest man, light a candle that I may make the tub clean within, to see if it be for my purpose or no, for I do not mind to cast away my money wilfully."

He immediately (being a very ox) lighted a candle, saying, " I pray you, good brother, put not yourself to so much pain. Let me make the tub clean and ready for you." Whereupon he put off his coat and crept under the tub to rub away the filth from the sides. In the mean season this minion lover had his pleasure with the wife, and as he was in the midst of his pastime he turned his head on this side and that side, finding fault with this and with that, till they had both ended their business, when he delivered seven pence for the tub, and caused the good man himself to carry it on his back to his inn.

*XXXIX.—How the priests of the goddess Syria
were taken and put in prison, and how
Apuleius was sold to a baker*

AFTER we had tarried there a few days at the cost and charges of the whole village, and had got much money by our divination and prognostication of things to come,¹ the priests of

¹ So used feigned Egyptians of late years in England.—ADLINGTON'S
NOTE.

the goddess Syria invented a new means to pick men's purses, for they had certain lots, whereon was written, " *Conjuncti terram proscindunt boves ut in futurum læta germinent sata* ": that is to say, The oxen, tied and yoked together, do plough the ground to the intent it may bring forth its increase. And by these lots they deceived many of the simple sort, for if one had demanded whether he should have a good wife or no, they would say that his lot did testify the same, that he should be tied and yoked to a good woman and have increase of children. If one demanded whether he should buy lands and possessions, they said that he should have much ground that should yield him increase. If one demanded whether he should have a good and prosperous voyage, they said he should have good success, and it should be for the increase of his profit. If one demanded whether he should vanquish his enemies, and prevail in pursuit of thieves, they said that his enemies should be tied and yoked to him : and his pursuit after thieves should be prosperous.

Thus by the telling of fortunes they gathered a great quantity of money, but when they were weary with giving of answers they drove me away before them the next night, through a lane which was more dangerous and stony than the way which we went the night before, for on the one side were quagmires and foggy marshes, and on the other side were falling trenches and ditches, whereby my legs failed me, in such sort that I could scarce come to the plain field paths. And

behold by and by a great company of the inhabitants of the town, armed with weapons and on horseback, overtook us, and incontinently arresting Philebus and his priests, tied them by the necks and beat them cruelly, calling them thieves and robbers, and after they had manacled their hands, "Show us" (quoth they) "the cup of gold which (under the colour of your solemn religion) ye have taken away, and now ye think to escape in the night without punishment for your act."

Immediately one came towards me, and thrusting his hand into the bosom of the goddess Syria brought out the cup which they had stolen. Howbeit, for all their robbery, which appeared evident and plain, they would not be confounded nor abashed, but jesting and laughing out the matter, said, "Is it reason, masters, that you should thus rigorously entreat us, and threaten, for a small trifling cup, which the mother of the goddess determined to give to her sister for a present?"

Howbeit, for all their lies and cavillations, they were carried back to the town and put in prison by the inhabitants, who, taking the cup of gold and the goddess which I bore, did put and consecrate them amongst the treasure of the temple.

The next day I was carried to the market to be sold, and my price was set at seven pence more than Philebus gave for me. There fortunèd to pass by a baker of the next village, who, after he had

bought a great deal of corn, bought me likewise to carry it home, and when he had well loaded me therewith, he drove me through a thorny and dangerous way to his bakehouse. There I saw a great company of horses that went in the mill day and night grinding of corn ; but lest I should be discouraged at the first, my master entertained me well.

For the first day I did nothing but fare daintily. Howbeit, such my ease and felicity did not long endure ; for the next day following I was tied to the mill betimes in the morning, with my face covered, to the end that in turning and winding so often one way I should not become giddy, but keep a certain course. But although when I was a man I had seen many such horse-mills, and knew well enough how they should be turned, yet feigning myself ignorant of such kind of toil, I stood still and would not go, whereby I thought I should be taken from the mill as an ass unapt and put to some other light labour, or else be driven into the fields to pasture. But my subtlety did me small good, for by and by when the mill stood still, the servants came about me crying and beating me forward, in such sort that I could not stay to advise myself, whereby all the company laughed to see so sudden a change. When a good part of the day was past, and I was not able to endure any longer, they took off my harness and tied me to the manger, but although my bones were weary, and I needed to refresh myself with rest and provender, yet I was so curious that I did greatly

delight to behold the baker's art, insomuch that I could not eat nor drink while I looked on. O good Lord, what a sort of poor slaves were there! Some had their skin black and blue; some had their backs striped with lashes; some were covered with ragged sacks; some wore such ragged clouts that you might perceive all their naked bodies; some were marked and burned in the foreheads with hot irons; some had their hair half-clipped; some had locks on their legs, some were ugly and evil-favoured that they could scarce see, their eyes and faces were so black and dim with smoke, like those who fight together in the sands, and know not where they strike by reason of dust; and some had their faces all mealy. But how should I speak of the horses my companions—how they, being old and weak, thrust their heads into the manger: they had their necks all wounded and worn away; they rattled their nostrils with a continual cough; their sides were bare with their harness and great travail; their ribs were broken with beating; their hoofs were battered broad with incessant labour, and their skin rugged by reason of their lankness.

When I saw this dreadful sight, I greatly began to fear, lest I should come to the like state; and considering with myself the good fortune which I was sometime in when I was a man, I greatly lamented, holding down my head, and would eat no meat, but I saw no comfort or consolation of my evil fortune, saving that my mind was somewhat recreated to hear and understand what every

man said, for they neither feared nor doubted my presence. At that time I remembered how Homer, the divine author of ancient poetry, described him to be a wise man who had travelled divers countries and nations, wherefore I gave great thanks to my assy form, in that by that mean I had seen the experience of many things, and was become more wise, notwithstanding the great misery and labour which I daily sustained. But I will tell you a pretty jest, which comes now to my remembrance, to the intent your ears may be delighted in hearing the same.

*XL.—How Apuleius was handled by the
baker's wife*

THE baker who bought me was an honest and sober man, but his wife was the most pestilent woman in all the world, insomuch that he endured many miseries and afflictions with her, so that I myself did secretly pity his estate and bewail his evil fortune ; for she had not one fault alone, but all the mischiefs that could be devised. She was crabbed, cruel, lascivious, drunken, obstinate, niggish, covetous, riotous in filthy expenses, an enemy to faith and chastity, a despiser of all the gods whom others did honour, one that affirmed that she had a god by herself (whereby she deceived all men, but especially her poor husband), one that abandoned her body with continual whoredom.

This mischievous quean hated me in such

sort ¹ that she commanded every day, before she was up, that I should be put in the mill to grind ; and the first thing which she would do in the morning was to see me cruelly beaten, and that I should grind when the other beasts did feed and take rest. When I saw that I was so cruelly handled, she gave me occasion to learn her conversation and life, for I saw oftentime a young man who would privily go into her chamber, whose face I did greatly desire to see, but I could not, by reason that my eyes were covered every day.

And verily if I had been free and at liberty I would have discovered all her abomination. She had an old woman, a messenger of mischief, that daily haunted her house, and made good cheer with her, to the utter undoing and impoverishment of her husband. But I, who was greatly offended with the negligence of Fotis, who made me an ass instead of a bird, did yet comfort myself by this only means, in that, to the miserable deformity of my shape, I had long ears, whereby I might hear all things that were done.

On a day I heard the old woman say to the baker's wife, " Dame, you have chosen (without my counsel) a young man to be your lover, who, as me seemeth, is dull, fearful, without any grace, and dastardly coucheth at the frowning looks of your odious husband, whereby you have no delight nor pleasure with him. How far better is the young man Philesiterus, who is comely, beautiful,

¹ There is no malice above the malice of a woman.—ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

in the flower of his youth, liberal, courteous, valiant and stout against the diligent pries and watches of your husband, worthy to embrace the worthiest dames of this country, and worthy to wear a crown of gold for one part that he played to one that was jealous over his wife. Hearken how it was, and then judge the diversity of these two lovers. Know you one Barbarus, a senator of our town, whom the vulgar people call likewise Scorpion for his severity of manners? This Barbarus had a gentlewoman to his wife, whom he caused daily to be enclosed within his house with diligent custody."

Then the baker's wife said, "I know her very well, for we two dwelt together in one house."

"Then you know" (quoth the old woman) "the whole tale of Philesiterus?"

"No, verily" (said she), "but I greatly desire to know it: therefore I pray you, mother, tell me the whole story."

At once the old woman, who knew well how to babble, began to tell as follows:—

*XLI.—How Barbarus, being jealous over his wife,
commanded that she should be kept close in
his house, and what happened*

"**YOU** shall understand that on a day this Barbarus, preparing himself to ride abroad, and willing to keep the chastity of his wife (whom he so well loved) alone to himself, called his man Myrmex (whose faith he had tried

and proved in many things), and secretly committed to him the custody of his wife, willing him that he should threaten that if any man did but touch her with his finger as he passed by, he would not only put him in prison, and bind him hand and foot, but also cause him to be put to death, or else to be famished for lack of sustenance ; which words he confirmed by oath of all the gods in heaven ; and so he departed away.¹

“When Barbarus was gone, Myrmex, being greatly astonished at his master’s threatenings, would not suffer his mistress to go abroad, but as she sat all day a-spinning he was so careful that he sat by her. When night came he went with her to the baths, holding her by the garment, so faithful he was to fulfil the commandment of his master. Howbeit, the beauty of this noble matron could not be hidden from the burning eyes of Philesiterus, who, considering her great chastity, and how she was diligently kept by Myrmex, thought it impossible to have his purpose. Yet (endeavouring by all kinds of means to enterprise the matter, and remembering the fragility of man, that might be enticed and corrupted with money, since by gold the adamant gates may be opened ²) on a day when he found Myrmex alone, he discovered his love, desiring him to show his favour (otherwise he should certainly die), with assurance that he need not fear, since he might privily be let in and out in the night without knowledge of any person.

¹ What is more worse than a jealous person ?—ADLINGTON’S NOTE.

² Gold conquereth all things.—ADLINGTON’S NOTE.

“When he thought with these and other gentle words to allure and prick forward the obstinate mind of Myrmex he showed him glittering gold in his hand, saying that he would give his mistress twenty crowns and him ten. But Myrmex, hearing these words, was greatly troubled, abhorring in his mind to commit so wicked a mischief; wherefore he stopped his ears, and turning his head departed away. Howbeit, the glittering hue of these crowns he could never get out of his mind, but being at home he seemed to see the money before his eyes, which was so worthy a prey that poor Myrmex, being in divers opinions, could not tell what to do. On the one side he considered the promise which he made to his master, and the punishment which should ensue if he did contrary. On the other side he thought of the gain and the passing pleasure of the crowns of gold. In the end the desire of the money did more prevail than the fear of death, for the beauty of the flourishing crowns did so stick in his mind that where the menaces of his master compelled him to tarry at home, the pestilent avarice of the gold egged him out of doors. Wherefore putting all shame aside without further delay, he declared the whole matter to his mistress, who, according to the nature of women,¹ when she heard him speak of so great a sum, bound chastity in a string, and gave authority to Myrmex to rule her in that case. Myrmex, seeing the intent of his mistress, was very

¹ Women easily allured by gifts. Here gold broke faith and trust.
—ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

glad, and for great desire of the gold he ran hastily to Philesiterus, declaring that his mistress was consented to his mind, wherefore he demanded the gold which he promised. Then incontinently Philesiterus delivered him ten crowns, and when night came Myrmex brought him disguised into his mistress's chamber.

“About midnight, when he and she were making sacrifice to the goddess Venus, behold, her husband (contrary to their expectation) came and knocked at the door calling with a loud voice his servant Myrmex ; whose long tarrying increased the suspicion of his master, in such sort that he threatened to beat Myrmex cruelly. But he, being troubled with fear, and driven to his latter shifts, excused the matter, saying that he could not find the key, by reason it was so dark. In the mean season Philesiterus, hearing the noise at the door, slipped on his coat and privily ran out of the chamber. When Myrmex had opened the door to his master, who threatened terribly, and had let him in, he went into the chamber to his wife. In the meanwhile Myrmex let out Philesiterus and barred the doors fast, and went again to bed.

“The next morning, when Barbarus awoke, he perceived two unknown slippers lying under his bed, which Philesiterus had forgotten when he went away.¹ Then he conceived a great suspicion and jealousy in his mind. Howbeit, he would not discover it to his wife, neither to any other person, but putting secretly the slippers in

¹ Haste is no good.—ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

his bosom commanded his other servants to bind Myrmex incontinently, and to bring him bound to the Justice after him, thinking verily that by the means of the slippers he might bolt out the matter. It fortunèd that while Barbarus went toward the Justice in a fury and rage, and Myrmex, fast bound, followed him weeping, not because he was accused before his master, but by reason he knew his own conscience guilty, behold, by adventure Philesiterus (going about earnest business) fortunèd to meet with them by the way, who, fearing the matter which he committed the night before, and doubting lest it should be known, did suddenly invent a means to excuse Myrmex, for he ran upon him and beat him about the head with his fists cruelly, saying, 'Ah, mischievous varlet that thou art, and perjured knave! It were a good deed if the goddess and thy master here would put thee to death, for thou art worthy to be imprisoned, and to wear out these irons, who stole my slippers away when thou wert at the baths yesternight.'

"Barbarus, hearing these words, returned incontinently home, and called his servant Myrmex, commanding him to deliver the slippers again to the right owner."

The old woman had scarce finished her tale when the baker's wife said, "Verily, she is blessed and most blessed that hath the fruition of so worthy a lover; but as for me, poor wretch, I am fallen into the hands of a coward, who is not only afraid of my husband, but also of every clap of the

mill, and dares do nothing before the blind face of yonder scabbed ass."

Then the old woman answered, "I promise you certainly, if you will, you shall have this young man at your pleasure." And therewithal, when night came, she departed out of her chamber.

In the mean season the baker's wife made ready a supper, with abundance of wine and exquisite fare, so that there lacked nothing but the coming of the young man, for her husband supped at the house of one of her neighbours. When time came that my harness should be taken off and that I should rest myself, I was not so joyful of my liberty, as that when the veil was taken from my eyes I should see all the abomination of this mischievous quean.

When night was come and the sun gone down, behold, the old woman and the young man, who seemed to me but a child, by reason he had no beard, came to the door. Then the baker's wife kissed him a thousand times, and receiving him courteously, placed him down at the table. But he had scarce eaten the first morsel when the good man returned home, contrary to his wife's expectation, for she thought he would not have come so soon. But, Lord, how she cursed him, praying God that he might break his neck at the first entry in.

In the mean season she caught her lover and thrust him into the bin where she bolted her flour, and dissimulating the matter, finally came to her husband, demanding why he came home

so soon. "I could not abide" (quoth he) "to see so great a mischief and wicked act which my neighbour's wife committed, but I must run away. Oh, harlot as she is, how she hath dishonoured her husband! I swear by this goddess Ceres, that if I had not seen it with my eyes, I would never have believed it." His wife, desirous to know the matter, desired him to tell what she had done. Then he accorded to the request of his wife, and, ignorant of the state of his own house, declared the mischance of another.¹

"You shall understand" (quoth he) "that the wife of the fuller, my companion, who seemed to be a wise and chaste woman regarding her own honesty and the profit of her house, was found this night with her knave. For while we went to wash our hands, he and she were together; who, being troubled by our presence, ran into a corner, where she thrust him into a mew² made with twigs, appointed to lay clothes on to make them white with the smoke and fume of brimstone. Then she sat down with us at the table to colour the matter.

"In the mean season the young man, covered in the mew, could not forbear sneezing, by reason of the smoke of the brimstone. The good man, thinking it had been his wife who sneezed, cried, 'Christ help.'³ But when he sneezed more

¹ As quick of sight abroad as a lynx; but blind at home.—ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

² A hawk-like cage: any sort of hiding-place.

³ Or Benedicite: it is still customary in remote country districts to invoke divine or saintly aid when a person sneezes. See also Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*.—ED.

and more, he suspected the matter, and willing to know who it was rose from the table and went to the mew, where he found the young man well-nigh dead with smoke. When he understood the whole matter he was so inflamed with anger that he called for a sword to kill him ; and undoubtedly he had killed him had not I restrained his violent hands from his purpose, assuring him that his enemy would die with the force of the brimstone without the harm which he should do. Howbeit, my words would not appease his fury, but as necessity required, we took the young man, well-nigh choked, and carried him out at the doors. In the mean season I counselled his wife to absent herself at her neighbours' houses, till the choler of her husband was pacified, lest he should be moved against her, as he was against the young man. And so being weary of their supper, I forthwith returned home."

When the baker had told this tale, his impudent wife began to curse and abhor the wife of the fuller, and generally all other wives which abandon their bodies with any other than with their own husbands, breaking the faith and bond of marriage, whereby, she said, they were worthy to be burned alive.¹ But knowing her own guilty conscience, lest her lover, lying in the bin, should be hurt, she willed her husband to go to bed ; but he, having eaten nothing, said that he would sup before he went to rest ; wherefore she was compelled,

¹ Abhorring such crimes in others as they use themselves.—
ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

maugre her eyes, to set such things on the table as she had prepared for her lover.

But I, considering the great mischief of this wicked quean, devised with myself how I might reveal the matter to my master, and by kicking away the cover of the bin (where like a snail the young man was couched) make her whoredom apparent and known. At length I was aided by the providence of God, for there was an old man to whom the custody of us was committed, that drove me, poor ass, and the other horses at the same time, to the water to drink. Then had I good occasion ministered to revenge the injury of my master, for as I passed by I perceived the fingers of the young man upon the side of the bin, and lifting up my heels I spurned off the flesh with the force of my hooves, whereby he was compelled to cry out, and to throw down the bin on the ground, and so the whoredom of the baker's wife was known and revealed.

The baker, seeing this, was little moved at the dishonesty of his wife, but he took the young man (trembling for fear) by the hand, and with cold and courteous words spoke in this sort: "Fear not, my son, nor think that I am so barbarous or cruel a person that I would stifle thee up with the smoke of sulphur, as our neighbour accustometh, nor will I not punish thee according to the rigour of the law Julia. No, no, I will not execute my cruelty against so fair and comely a young man as you be. I have always lived with my wife in such tranquillity that, according to the saying of

the wise men, whatsoever I say she holds for law, and indeed equity will not suffer but that the husband should bear more authority than the wife."

With these and like words he led the young man to his chamber, and closed his wife in another chamber, whereby he might revenge his enemy at his pleasure. On the next morrow he called two of the sturdiest servants of his house, who held up the young man while he scourged him well-favouredly with rods like a child. When he had well beaten him, he said, "Art thou not ashamed, thou that art so tender and delicate a child, to desire the violation of honest marriages, and to defame thyself with wicked living, whereby thou hast gotten the name of an adulterer?" After he had spoken these and like words, he whipped him again and chased him out of his house.

Soon after, the baker sent one to his wife who divorced her away in his name. But she, beside her own natural mischief (offended at this great contumely, though she had worthily deserved the same) had recourse to wicked arts and trumpery, never ceasing till she had found out an enchantress who (as it was thought) could do what she would with her sorcery and conjuration.¹ The baker's wife began to entreat her, promising that she would largely recompense her if she could bring one of these things to pass—either to make

¹ In like sort do many nowadays go to wise women, who are witches, when they have lost silver spoons or have their cattle hurt, to seek remedy; but to seek redress by such means is lack of faith, when they forsake God and run for help to the devil, with whom, as S. Augustine sayeth, they shall be damned.—ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

her husband be reconciled to her again, or else, if he would not agree thereto, to send an ill spirit into him, to dispossess the spirit of her husband. Then the witch, with her abominable science, began to conjure and to make her ceremonies to turn the heart of the baker to his wife. But all was in vain. Wherefore, considering on the one side that she could not bring her purpose to pass, and on the other side the loss of her gain, she ran hastily to the baker, threatening to send an ill spirit to kill him by means of her conjurations.

But peradventure some scrupulous reader may demand me a question, how I, being an ass, and tied always in the mill-house, could know the secrets of these women. Verily, I answer, notwithstanding my shape of an ass, I had the sense and knowledge of a man, and curiously endeavoured to know out such injuries as were done to my master.

About noon there came a woman into the mill-house, very sorrowful, raggedly attired, with bare feet, meagre, ill-favoured, and her hair scattering upon her face. This woman took the baker by the hand, and feigning that she had some secret matter to tell him, went into a chamber, where they remained a good space, till all the corn was ground, when the servants were compelled to call their master to give them more corn. But when they had called very often, and no person gave answer, they began to mistrust, insomuch that they broke open the door. When they were come in they could not find the woman, but only

their master hanging dead upon a rafter of the chamber¹; whereupon they cried and lamented greatly, and, according to the custom, when they had washed themselves they took the body and buried it.

The next morrow the daughter of the baker, who was married but a little before to one of the next village, came crying and beating her breast, not because she heard of the death of her father by any man, but because his lamentable spirit with a halter about his neck appeared to her in the night, declaring the whole circumstance of his death, and how by enchantment he was descended to hell, which caused her to think that her father was dead. After that she had lamented a good space, and was somewhat comforted by the servants of the house; and when nine days were expired, as inheritress to her father she sold away all the substance of the house, whereby the goods chanced into divers men's hands.

*XLII.—How Apuleius, after the baker was
hanged, was sold to a gardener, and what
dreadful things happened*

THERE was a poor gardener amongst the rest, who bought me for the sum of fifty pence, which seemed to him a great price, but he thought to gain it again by the continual travail of my body. The matter requireth to tell, likewise,

¹ Such things witches accustom to do in these days, by the permission of God.—ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

how I was handled in his service. This gardener accustomed to drive me every morning, loaded with herbs, to the next village, and when he had sold his herbs he would mount upon my back and return to the garden, and while he dug the ground and watered the herbs, and went about other business, I did nothing but repose myself with great ease. But when winter approached, with sharp hail, rain and frosts, I, standing always under a hedge-side, was well-nigh killed up with cold, and my master was so poor that he had no lodging for himself, much less had he any litter or place to cover me withal, for he himself always lay under a little roof, shadowed and covered with boughs. In the morning when I rose I found my hooves shrivelled together with cold, and unable to pass upon the sharp ice and frosty mire, neither could I fill my belly with meat as I accustomed to do, for my master and I supped together and had both one fare. Howbeit, it was very slender, since we had nothing else saving old and unsavoury sallets, which were suffered to grow for seed, like long brooms, and that had lost all their sweet sap and juice.

It fortune'd on a day that an honest man of the next village was benighted, and constrained by reason of the rain to lodge (very lagged and weary) in our garden, where, although he was but meanly received, yet it served well enough considering time and necessity.¹ This honest man,

¹ Poor fare and poor lodging in time of necessity is good.—
ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

to recompense our entertainment, promised to give my master some corn, oil and two bottles of wine ; wherefore my master, not delaying the matter, loaded me with sacks and bottles, and rode to the town, which was seven miles off.

When we came to the honest man's house he entertained and feasted my master exceedingly, and it fortun'd, while they ate and drank together, as sign of great amity, there chanced a strange and dreadful case ; for there was a hen which ran cackling about the yard as though she would have laid an egg. The goodman of the house, perceiving her, said, " O good and profitable pullet that feedest us every day with thy fruit, thou seemest as though thou wouldst give us some pittance for our dinner. Ho, boy ! Put the pannier in the corner that the hen may lay."

Then the boy did as his master commanded, but the hen, forsaking the pannier, came towards her master and laid at his feet not an egg which every man knoweth, but a chicken with feathers, claws and eyes, which incontinently ran peeping after his dame.

By and by happened a more strange thing, which would cause any man to abhor. Under the table where they sat the ground opened, and there appeared a great well and fountain of blood, insomuch that the drops thereof sprinkled about the table. At the same time, while they wondered at this dreadful sight, one of the servants came running out of the cellar, and told that all the wine was boiled out of the vessels, as though there had

been some great fire under. By and by a weasel was seen that drew into the house a dead serpent, and out of the mouth of a shepherd's dog leaped a live frog, and immediately after one brought word that a ram had strangled the same dog with one bite.¹

All these things that happened astonished the goodman of the house and the residue that were present, insomuch they could not tell what to do, or with what sacrifice to appease the anger of the gods. While every man was thus stricken in fear, behold, one brought word to the goodman of the house that his three sons, who had been brought up in good literature, and endued with good manners, were dead.² They three had great acquaintance and ancient amity with a poor man who was their neighbour and dwelt hard by them. And next to him dwelt another young man, very rich both in lands and goods, but bending from the pride of his glorious progeny's, and ruling himself in the town according to his own will. This young roisterer mortally hated this poor man, insomuch that he would kill his sheep, steal his oxen, and spoil his corn and other fruits before the time of ripeness; yet was he not contented with this, but he would encroach upon the poor man's ground and claim all his heritage as his own.³

The poor man, who was very simple and fearful,

¹ Such things happen before death and dreadful chances.—
ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

² The thing which the said strange tokens foreshowed.—
ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

³ Might overcome right.—ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

his master, who at his first coming took up a stone and threw it at the third brother ; but by reason the stone ran along his arm it did not hurt him, which chanced otherwise than all men's expectation was. At once the young man, feigning that his arm was greatly wounded, spoke these words to the cruel bloodsucker : " Now mayst thou, thou wretch, triumph upon the destruction of all our family ! Now hast thou fed thy insatiable cruelty with the blood of three brethren ! Now mayst thou rejoice at the fall of us citizens ! Yet think not but that how far so ever thou dost remove and extend the bounds of thy land, thou shalt have some neighbour. But how greatly am I sorry in that I have lost my arm wherewithal I minded to cut off thy head."

When he had spoken these words, the furious thief drew out his dagger, and running upon the young man thought verily to have slain him, but it chanced otherwise, for the young man resisted him stoutly, and in buckling together by violence wrested the dagger out of his hand ; which done, he killed the rich thief with his own weapon, and to the intent the young man would escape the hands of the servants, who came running to assist their master, with the same dagger he cut his own throat.¹

These things were signified by the strange and dreadful wonders which fortune'd in the house of the goodman, who, after he had heard these

¹ Nothing worse than to fall into the hands of enemies.—ADLINGTON'S NOTE.

sorrowful tidings, could in no wise weep, so far was he stricken with dolour, but presently taking his knife, wherewith he cut his cheese and other meat before, he cut his own throat likewise, in such sort that he fell upon the board and imbrued the table with the streams of his blood in most miserable manner.

Hereby was my master, the gardener, deprived of his hope, and paying for his dinner with the watery tears of his eyes, mounted upon my back, and so we went homeward the same way as we came.

XLIII.—How Apuleius was found by his shadow

AS we passed by the way we met with a tall soldier (for so his habit and countenance declared), who, with proud and arrogant words, spoke to my master in this sort: “*Quorsum vacuum ducis asinum?*”¹

My master, somewhat astonished at the strange sights which he saw before, and ignorant of the Latin tongue, rode on and spoke never a word. The soldier, unable to refrain his insolence and offended at his silence, struck him on the shoulders as he sat upon my back. Then my master gently made answer that he understood not what he said, whereat the soldier angrily demanded again whither he rode with his ass. “*Marry*” (quoth he), “to the next city.” “*But I*” (quoth the soldier) “have need of his help to carry the

¹ “Whither are you leading your empty ass?”—ED.

his master, who at his first coming took up a stone and threw it at the third brother ; but by reason the stone ran along his arm it did not hurt him, which chanced otherwise than all men's expectation was. At once the young man, feigning that his arm was greatly wounded, spoke these words to the cruel bloodsucker : " Now mayst thou, thou wretch, triumph upon the destruction of all our family ! Now hast thou fed thy insatiable cruelty with the blood of three brethren ! Now mayst thou rejoice at the fall of us citizens ! Yet think not but that how far so ever thou dost remove and extend the bounds of thy land, thou shalt have some neighbour. But how greatly am I sorry in that I have lost my arm wherewithal I minded to cut off thy head."

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¹ “Whither are you leading your empty ass?”—Ed.

trusses of our captain from yonder castle." And therewithal he took me by the halter and would violently have taken me away, but my master, wiping away the blood of the blow which he received from the soldier, desired him gently and civilly to take some pity upon him, and to let him depart with his own, swearing and affirming that his slow ass, well-nigh dead with sickness, could scarce carry a few handfuls of herbs to the next town, much less was he able to bear any greater trusses. But when he saw the soldier would in no wise be entreated, but was ready with his staff to cleave my master's head, my master fell down at his feet, under colour to move him to some pity ; but when he saw his time, he took the soldier by the legs and cast him upon the ground. Then he buffeted him, thumped him, bit him, and took a stone and beat his face and his sides, that he could not turn or defend himself, but only threaten that if ever he rose he would chop him in pieces. The gardener, when he heard him say so, drew out the javelin which he had by his side, and when he had thrown it away he knocked and beat him more cruelly than he did before, insomuch that the soldier could not tell by what means to save himself, but by feigning that he was dead.

Then my master took the javelin and mounted upon my back, riding in all haste to the next village, having no regard to go to his garden ; and when he came thither he turned into one of his friends' houses and declared all the whole matter, desiring him to save his life, and to hide

himself and his ass in some secret place until such time as all danger was past. Then his friend, not forgetting the ancient amity between them, entertained him willingly, and drew me up a pair of stairs into a chamber. My master crept into a chest and lay hidden there, with the cover closed fast.

The soldier (as I afterwards learned) rose up as one awaked from a drunken sleep, but he could scarce go, by reason of his wounds. Howbeit at length, by little and little, through aid of his staff, he came to the town, but he would not declare the matter to any person, nor complain to any justice, lest he should be accused of cowardice or dastardness. Yet in the end he told some of his companions of all the matter that happened. Then they took him and caused him to be closed in some secret place, thinking that beside the injury which he had received he should be accused of the breach of his faith, by reason of the loss of his spear ; and when they had learned the signs of my master they went to search him out.

At last there was an unfaithful neighbour that told them where we were. Then incontinently the soldiers went to the Justice, declaring that they had lost by the way a silver goblet of their captain's, and that a gardener had found it, who, refusing to re-deliver the goblet, was hidden in one of his friends' houses. By and by the magistrates, understanding the loss of the captain, came to the doors where we were, and commanded our host to deliver my master, upon pain of death.

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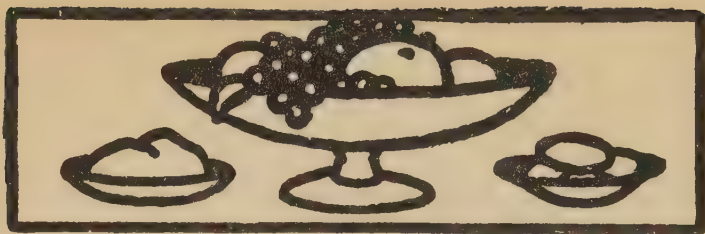
Howbeit, these threatenings could not enforce him to confess that he was within his doors, but by reason of his faithful promise, and for the safeguard of his friend, he said that he saw not the gardener a great while, neither knew where he was. The soldiers said contrary, wherefore to know the verity of the matter the magistrates commanded their sergeants and ministers to search every corner of the house. But when they could find neither gardener nor ass there was a great contention between the soldiers and our host, for they said we were within the house, and he said No.

But I, who was very curious to know the matter, when I heard so great a noise, put my head out of the window to learn what the stir and tumult signified. It fortuned that one of the soldiers perceived my shadow, whereupon he began to cry, saying that he had certainly seen me.

Then they were all glad and came up into the chamber and pulled me down like a prisoner. When they had found me they doubted nothing of the gardener, but seeking about more narrowly, at length they found him couched in a chest. And so they brought out the poor gardener to the justices, who was committed immediately to prison ; but they could never forbear laughing from the time they found me by my shadow, whereof is risen a common proverb, " The shadow of the ass."

Here ends the Ninth Book of Lucius Apuleius.

THE TENTH BOOK OF
LUCIUS APULEIUS OF
THE GOLDEN ASS



THE TENTH BOOK OF LUCIUS APULEIUS OF THE GOLDEN ASS

*XLIV.—How the soldier drove Apuleius away,
and how he came to a captain's house ; and
what happened there*

THE next day, how my master, the gardener, sped, I knew not, but the gentle soldier, who was well beaten for his cowardice, led me to his lodging without the contradiction of any man. There he loaded me well and garnished my body (as seemed to me) like an ass of arms ; for on the one side I bore a helmet that shone exceedingly, on the other side a target that glistened more a thousand-fold, and on the top of my burden he had put a long spear ; which things he placed thus gallantly, not because he was so expert in war (for the gardener proved contrary), but to the end he might fear those who passed by when they saw such a similitude of war. When we had gone a good part of our journey, over the plain and easy fields, we fortunèd to come to a little town, where we lodged at a certain captain's house. And there the soldier took me to one of the servants, while he himself went toward his captain, who had the

charge of a thousand men. And when we had remained there a few days, I understood of a wicked and mischievous act committed there, which I have put in writing, to the end you may know the same.

The master of the house had a son instructed in good literature and endued with virtuous manners, such a one as you would desire to have the like, long time before his mother died. And then his father married a new wife, and had another child of the age of twelve years. This stepdame was more excellent in beauty than honesty, for she loved this young man her son-in-law, either because she was unchaste by nature, or because she was enforced by fate of stepmother to commit so great a mischief. Gentle reader, thou shalt not read of a fable, but rather a tragedy. This woman, when her love began first to kindle in her heart, could easily resist her desire and inordinate appetite, by reason of shame and fear lest her intent should be known. But after it compassed and burned every part of her breast, she was compelled to yield to the raging flame of Cupid, and under colour of the disease and infirmity of her body to conceal the wound of her restless mind. Every man knows well the signs and tokens of love and the malady convenient to the same. Her countenance was pale, her eyes sorrowful, her knees weak, and there was no comfort in her, but continual weeping and sobbing, insomuch you would have thought that she had some spice of an ague, saving that she wept unmeasurably. The

physicians knew not her disease when they felt the beating of her veins, the intemperance of her heat, the sobbing sighs, and her often tossing on every side. No, no, the cunning physicians knew it not, but a scholar of Venus' court might easily conjecture the whole.

After she had been long time tormented in her affection and was no more able to conceal her ardent desire, she caused her son to be called for (which word "son" she would fain put away, if it were not for shame). Then he, nothing disobedient to the commandment of his mother, with a sad and modest countenance came into the chamber of his stepdame, the mother of his brother; but she, speaking never a word, was in great doubt what she might do, and could not tell what to say first, by reason of shame. This young man, suspecting no ill, with humble courtesy demanded the cause of her present disease. Then she, having found an occasion to utter her wicked intent, with weeping eyes and covered face began boldly to speak to him in this manner: "Thou, thou, art the original cause of my present dolour. Thou art my comfort and only health, for those thy comely eyes are so fastened within my breast that unless thou succour me I shall certainly die. Have pity therefore upon me, be not the occasion of my destruction, neither let thy conscience reclaim to offend thy father, whenas thou shalt save the life of thy mother. Moreover, since thou dost resemble thy father's shape in every point, it giveth me cause the more to fancy thee. Now

is ministered to thee time and place. Now hast thou occasion to work thy will, seeing that we are alone. And it is a common saying, 'Never known, never done.'"

This young man, troubled in his mind at so sudden an ill, although he abhorred to commit so great a crime, yet he would not cast her off with a present denial, but warily pacified her mind with delay of promise. Wherefore he promised her to do all according to her desire, and in the mean season he willed his mother to be of good cheer, and comfort herself till he might find some convenient time to come to her, when his father was ridden forth. Wherewithal he got him away from the pestilent sight of his stepdame. And knowing that this matter, touching the ruin of all the whole house, needed the counsel of wise and grave persons, he went incontinently to a sage old man and declared the whole circumstance of the matter. The old man, after long deliberation, thought there was no better means to avoid the storm of cruel fortune to come than to run away.

In the mean season this wicked woman, impatient of her love and the long delay of her son, egged her husband to ride abroad into far countries; and then she asked the young man the accomplishment of his promise. But he, to deliver himself entirely from her hands, would find always excuses, till in the end she understood by the messengers that came in and out that he nothing regarded her. Then she, by how much she loved him before, by so much and more she

hated him now. And by and by she called one of her servants, ready to all mischiefs, to whom she declared all her secrets. And there it was concluded between those two that the surest way was to kill the young man. Whereupon this varlet went incontinently to buy poison, which he mingled with wine, to the intent he would give it the young man to drink, and thereby presently kill him.

But while they were in deliberation how they might offer it to him, behold, here happened a strange adventure. For the young son of the woman, who came from school at noon, being very thirsty, took the pot wherein the poison was mingled, and, ignorant of the hidden venom, drank a good draught thereof, which was prepared to kill his brother; whereby he presently fell down to the ground dead.

His schoolmaster, seeing this sudden change, called his mother and all the servants of the house, with a loud voice. Incontinently every man declared his opinion touching the death of the child. But the cruel woman, the only example of stepmothers' malice, was nothing moved by the bitter death of her son, or by her own conscience of parricide, or by the misfortune of her house, or by the dolour of her husband, but rather devised the destruction of all her family. For by and by she sent a messenger after her husband to tell him the great misfortune which happened after his departure. And when he came home the wicked woman declared that his son had poisoned his

brother because he would not consent to his will, and told him divers other leasings, adding in the end that he threatened to kill her likewise because she discovered the fact.

Then the unhappy father was stricken with double dolour of the death of his two children, for on the one side he saw his younger son slain before his eyes, on the other side he seemed to see the elder condemned to die for his offence. Again, where he beheld his wife lament in such sort, it gave him further occasion to hate his son more deadly.

But the funeral of his younger son was scarce finished when the old man, the father, with weeping eyes, even at the return from the grave, went to the justice and accused his son of the slaughter of his brother, and how he threatened to slay his wife, whereby (the rather at his weeping and great lamentation) he moved all the magistrates and people to pity, insomuch that, without any delay or further inquisition, they cried all that he should be stoned to death. But the justices, fearing a further inconvenience to arise by a particular vengeance, and to the end there might fortune no sedition amongst the people, prayed the decurions and other officers of the city that they might proceed by examination of witnesses, and with order of justice, according to the ancient custom, before the giving of any hasty sentence, or judgement without hearing of the contrary part, like as the barbarous and cruel tyrants accustom to use ; otherwise they should give an

ill example to their successors. This opinion pleased every man, wherefore the senators and counsellors were called, who, being placed in order according to their dignity, caused the accuser and defender to be brought forth, and by the example of the Athenian law and judgement martial, their advocates were commanded to plead their causes briefly, without preambles or motions of the people to pity, which were too long a process.

And if you demand how I understood all this matter, you shall understand that I heard many declare the same ; but to recite what words the accuser used in his invective, what answer the defender made, the orations and pleadings of each party, verily I am not able to do, for I was fast bound at the manger. But as I learned and knew by others, I will, God willing, declare to you.

So it was ordered that after the pleadings of both sides were ended, they thought best to try and bolt out the verity by witnesses, all presumptions and likelihoods set apart, and to call in the servant who only was reported to know all the matter. By and by the servant came in, who, nothing abashed at the fear of so great a judgement, or at the presence of the judges, or at his own guilty conscience, which he so finely feigned, with a bold countenance presented himself before the justices, and confirmed the accusation against the young man, saying, " O ye judges, on a day when this young man loathed and hated his stepmother, he called me, desiring me to poison his brother, whereby he might revenge himself, and if I would do it, and

keep the matter secret, he promised to give me a good reward for my pains ; but when the young man perceived that I would not accord to his will, he threatened to slay me ; whereupon he went himself and bought poison, and after tempered it with wine, and then gave it me to give to the child which, when I refused, he offered it to his brother with his own hands."

When the varlet, with a trembling countenance, had ended these words, which seemed a likelihood of truth, the judgement was ended ; neither was there found any judge or counsellor so merciful to the young man accused as would not judge him culpable, but that he should be put and sewn in a skin with a dog, a cock, a snake and an ape, according to the law against parricides : wherefore there wanted nothing but (as the ancient custom was) to put white stones and black into a pot, and to take them out again, to see whether the young man accused should be acquitted by judgement or condemned, which was a thing irrevocable. In the mean season he was delivered to the hands of the executioner.

But there arose a sage and ancient physician, a man of good conscience and credit throughout all the city, who stopped the mouth of the pot wherein the stones were cast, saying, " I am right glad, ye reverend judges, that I am a man of name and estimation amongst you, whereby I am accounted such a one as will not suffer any person to be put to death by false and untrue accusations, considering there has been no homicide or

murder committed by this young man in this case, neither you (being sworn to judge uprightly) to be misinformed and abused by invented lies and tales. For I cannot but declare and open my conscience, lest I should be found to bear small honour and faith to the gods : wherefore I pray you give ear, and I will show you the whole truth of the matter. You shall understand that this servant, who has merited to be hanged, came one of these days to speak with me, promising to give me a hundred crowns if I would give him a present poison which would cause a man to die suddenly, saying that he would have it for one that was sick of an incurable disease, to the end he might be delivered from all his torment. But I, smelling his crafty and subtle fetch, and fearing lest he would work some mischief withal, gave him a drink. But to the intent I might clear myself from all danger that might happen I would not presently take the money which he offered : but lest any one of the crowns should lack weight or be found counterfeit, I willed him to seal the purse wherein they were put with his manual sign, whereby the next day we might go together to the goldsmith to try them, which he did : wherefore, understanding that he was brought present before you this day, I hastily commanded one of my servants to fetch the purse which he had sealed, and here I bring it to you to see whether he will deny his own sign or no ; and you may easily conject that his words are untrue which he alleged against the young man touching the

buying of the poison, considering he bought the poison himself."

When the physician had spoken these words, you might perceive how the traitorous knave changed his colour, how he sweat for fear, how he trembled in every part of his body, and how he set one leg upon another, scratching his head and grinding his teeth, whereby there was no person but would judge him culpable. In the end, when he was somewhat returned to his former subtlety, he began to deny all that was said, and stoutly affirmed that the physician lied. But the physician, perceiving that he was railed at and his words denied, never ceased to confirm his sayings and to disprove the varlet till such time as the officers, by the commandment of the judges, bound his hands and brought out the seal wherewith he had sealed the purse, which augmented the suspicion which was conceived of him first. Howbeit, neither the fear of the wheel nor any other torment (according to the use of the Grecians) which was ready prepared, no, nor yet the fire, could enforce him to confess the matter, so obstinate and grounded was he in his mischievous mind.

But the physician, perceiving that the menaces of those torments did nothing prevail, said, "I cannot suffer or abide that this young man, who is innocent, should against all law and conscience be punished and condemned to die, and the other, who is culpable, should escape so easily, and afterwards mock and flout at your judgement; for I

will give you an evident proof and argument of this present crime. You shall understand that when this caitiff demanded of me a present and strong poison, considering that it was not my part to give occasion of any other's death, but rather to cure and save sick persons by means of medicines, and on the other side, fearing lest if I should deny his request I might minister a further cause of his mischief, either that he would buy poison of some other, or else return and work his wicked intent with a sword or some dangerous weapon, I gave him no poison, but a doling drink of mandragora, which is of such force that it will cause any man to sleep as though he were dead. Neither is it any marvel if this most desperate man, who is certainly assured to be put to death, ordained by an ancient custom, can suffer or abide these facile and easy torments : but if it be so that the child hath received the drink as I tempered it with my own hands, he is yet alive and does but sleep, and after his sleep he shall return to life again ; but if he be dead indeed, then may you further inquire of the causes of his death."

The opinion of this ancient physician was found good, and every man had a desire to go to the sepulchre where the child was laid. There was none of the justices, none of any reputation of the town, nor any of the common people, but went to see this strange sight. Amongst them all the father of the child removed with his own hands the stone of the sepulchre, and found his son rising up after his dead and soporiferous sleep,

whom, when he beheld, he embraced him in his arms, and presented him before the people with great joy and consolation ; and as he was wrapped and bound in his grave so he brought him before the judges, whereupon the wickedness of the servant and the treason of the stepdame were plainly discovered, and the verity of the matter revealed, whereby the woman was perpetually exiled, the servant hanged on a gallows, and the physician had the crowns which were prepared to buy the poison. Behold how the fortune of the old man was changed, who, thinking to be deprived of all his race and posterity, was in one moment made the father of two children ! But as for me, I was ruled and handled by fortune according to her pleasure.

*XLV.—How Apuleius was sold to two brethren,
whereof one was a baker, and the other a cook,
and how finely and daintily he fared*

THE soldier, who paid never a penny for me, by the commandment of his captain was sent to Rome to carry letters to the great prince and general of the camp, and before he went he sold me for eleven pence to two of his companions, being servants to a man of worship, whereof one was a baker that baked sweet bread and delicacies, the other a cook, who dressed fine and excellent meats for his master. These two lived in common, and would drive me from place to place to carry such things as were necessary, insomuch that I was

received by these two as a third brother and companion, and I thought I was never better placed than when with them, for when night came, the supper was done, and their business ended, they would bring many good morsels into their chamber for themselves. One would bring pigs, chickens, fish and other good meats, the other fine bread, pasties, tarts, custards and other delicate junkets dipped in honey. And when they had shut their chamber door and went to the baths, O Lord, how I would fill my guts with those goodly dishes. Neither was I so much a fool, or so very an ass, to leave the dainty meats and grind my teeth upon hard hay.

In this sort I continued a great space, for I played the honest ass, taking but a little of one dish and a little of another, whereby no man mistrusted me. In the end I was more hardier and began to devour the whole messes of the sweetest delicacies, which caused the baker and the cook to suspect ; howbeit, they never mistrusted me, but searched about to apprehend the thief. At length they began to accuse one another of theft, and to set the dishes and morsels of meat in order, one by another, to the end they would learn what was taken away, whereby one of them was compelled to say thus to his fellow, "Is it reason to break promise and faith in this sort, by stealing away the best meat and selling it to augment thy good, and yet nevertheless to have thy part of the residue that is left ? If our partnership mislikes thee, we will be partners and brothers in other

things, but in this we will break off ; for I perceive that the great loss which I sustain will at length be a cause of great discord between us."

Then answered the other, " Verily, I praise thy great constancy and subtleness, in that when thou hast secretly taken away the meat thou dost begin to complain first, whereas I by long space of time have suffered thee, because I would not seem to accuse my brother of theft. But I am right glad in that we are fallen into communication of this matter, lest by our silence like contention might arise between us, as fortunèd between Eteocles and his brother."

When they had reasoned together in this sort, they swore both earnestly that neither of them stole or took away any jot of the meat, wherefore they concluded to search out the thief by all kinds of means. For they could not imagine or think that the ass who stood alone there would eat any such meats ; neither could they think that mice or flies were so ravenous as to devour whole dishes of meat, like the birds or harpies which carried away the meats of Phineus, king of Arcadia.

In the mean season, while I was fed with dainty morsels, I gathered together my flesh, my skin waxed soft, my hair began to shine, and I was gallant on every part ; but such fair and comely shape of my body was cause of my dishonour, for the baker and the cook marvelled to see me so sleek and fine, considering I ate no hay at all. Presently on a time at their accustomed hour they went to the baths and locked their chamber door.

It fortuned that ere they departed away they espied me through a hole how I fell roundly to my victuals. Then they marvelled greatly, and, little esteeming the loss of their meat, laughed exceedingly, calling the servants of the house, to show them the greedy gorge and appetite of the ass. Their laughing was so immoderate that the master of the house heard them, and demanded the cause of their laughter; and when he understood all the matter, he looked through the hole likewise, wherewith he took such a delectation that he commanded the door to be opened, that he might see me at his pleasure.

Then I, beholding every man laugh, was nothing abashed, but rather more bold, whereby I never rested eating till such time as the master of the house commanded me to be brought into his parlour as a novelty, and there caused all kinds of meats, which had not been touched, to be set on the table, which, although I had eaten sufficiently before, yet to win the further favour of the master of the house I greedily devoured, and made a clean riddance of the delicate meats. And to prove my nature wholly, they gave me such meat as every ass doth greatly abhor; for they put before me beef and vinegar, birds and pepper, fish and verjuice.

In the mean season they who beheld me at the table did nothing but laugh. Then one of the servants of the house said to his master, "I pray you, sir, give him some drink to his supper." "Marry" (quoth he), "I think thou sayest true,

for so it may be that to his meat he would drink likewise a cup of wine. Ho, boy, wash yonder pot and fill it with wine, which done, carry it to the ass, and say that I have drunk to him."

Then all the standers-by looked on, to see what would come to pass ; but I, as soon as I beheld the cup, stayed not long, but gathering my lips together, supped up all the wine at one draught. The master, being right joyful hereat, caused the baker and the cook who had bought me to come before him, to whom he delivered four times as much for me as they paid, which done, he committed me to one of his rich libertines,¹ and charged him to look well to me, and that I should lack nothing ; who obeyed his master's commandment in every point, and to the end he would creep further into his favour taught me a thousand qualities. First he instructed me to sit at the table upon my tail, and how I should leap and dance, holding up my forefeet ; moreover, he taught me how I should answer when anybody spoke to me, with nodding my head, which was a strange and marvellous thing ; and if I lacked drink I should look still upon the pot. All which things I did willingly bring to pass, and obeyed his doctrine. Howbeit, I could have done all these things without his teaching, but I feared greatly, lest in showing myself cunning without a master I should portend some great and strange wonder, and therefore be thrown out to wild beasts.

¹ Freedmen.—Ed.

My fame was spread about in every place, and the qualities which I could do, insomuch that my master was renowned throughout all the country by reason of me, for every man would say, "Behold the gentleman that has an ass that will eat and drink with him, that will dance and, understanding what is said to him, will show his fantasy by signs."

But first I will tell you (which I should have done before) who my master was, and of what country. His name was Thiasus. He was born at Corinth, which is the principal town of all Achaia. He had passed many offices of honour, till he had taken upon him the office Quinquennial, according as his birth and dignity required; when, to show his worthiness, and to purchase the benevolence of every person, he appointed public joys and triumphs, to endure the space of three days; and to bring his endeavour to pass, he came into Thessaly to buy excellent beasts and valiant fighters for the purpose.

XLVI.—What other things happened to Apuleius

WHEN he had bought such things as was necessary he would not return home into his country in chariots, or waggons, neither would he ride upon Thessalian horses, or genets of France, or Spanish mules, which be most excellent that can be found, but caused me to be garnished and trimmed with trappers and barbs of gold, with brave harness, with purple coverings,

with a bridle of silver, with pictured clothes, and with shrilling bells ; and in this manner he rode upon me lovingly, speaking and entreating me with gentle words ; but above all things he did greatly rejoice in that I was his servant to bear him upon my back, and his companion to feed with him at the table.

After long time, when we had travelled as well by sea as land, and fortunèd to arrive at Corinth, the people of the town came about us on every side, not so much to do honour to Thiasus as to see me ; for my fame was so greatly spread there that I gained my master much money, and when the people were desirous to see me play qualities they caused the gates to be shut, and such as entered in should pay money, by means whereof I was a profitable companion to them every day.

It fortunèd that there was in this place a woman condemned to be eaten of wild beasts for poisoning of several persons ; wherefore my master devised to have me play qualities at the same time as she was thrown to the beasts. But I was greatly afeared by reason of this, lest they should devour me also. Howbeit, until the time came, standing in a pretty cabin, I rejoiced in myself to see that spring-time was come and that all things flourished, and I was in good hope to find some roses, to render me to my human shape.

When the day of the triumph came, I was led with great pomp and magnificence to the appointed place, whither, when I was brought, I

first saw the preamble of the triumph, dedicated with dancers and merry taunting jests ; and I, in the mean season, was placed before the gate of the theatre, where, on the one side, I saw the green and fresh grass growing before the entry thereof, whereon I greatly desired to feed, and on the other side I conceived a great delectation to see, when the theatre gates were opened, how all things were finely prepared and set forth. For there I might see young children and maidens in the flower of their youth, of excellent beauty and attired gorgeously, dancing and moving in comely order, according to the order of Greece, for sometimes they would dance in length, sometimes round together, sometimes divide themselves in four parts, and sometimes loose hands on every side.

But when the trumpet gave warning that every man should retire to his place, then began the triumph to appear. First there was a hill of wood, not much unlike that which the poet Homer called *Ida*, for it was garnished about with all sorts of green verdures and lively trees, from the top whereof ran down a clear and fresh fountain, nourishing the waters below ; about which wood were many young and tender goats, plucking and feeding daintily on the budding trees. Then came a young man, a shepherd, representing *Paris*, richly arrayed with vestments of *Barbary*, having a mitre of gold upon his head, and seeming as though he kept the goats. After him ensued another young man all naked, saving that his

left shoulder was covered with a rich cloak, and his head shining with glistering hairs, and hanging down, through which you might perceive two little wings, whereby you might conjecture that he was Mercury with his rod called *caduceus*. He bore in his right hand an apple of gold, and with a seemly gait went towards him that represented Paris, and after he had delivered him the apple, he made a sign signifying that Jupiter had commanded him so to do. When he had done his message he departed away.

And by and by, behold, there approached a fair and comely maiden, not much unlike to Juno, for she had a diadem of gold upon her head, and in her hand she bore a regal sceptre. Then followed another resembling Pallas, for she had on her head a shining sallet, whereon was bound a garland made of olive branches, having in one hand a target or shield, and in the other a spear, as though she would fight. Then came another, which surpassed the other in beauty, and represented the goddess Venus, with the colour of ambrosia, when she was a maiden; and to the end she would show her perfect beauty, she appeared all naked, saving that her fine and dainty skin was covered with a thin smock, which the wind blew hither and thither. To testify the youth and flower of the age of the dame, her colour was of two sorts, for her body was white, as descended from heaven, and her smock was bluish, as arrived from the sea.

After every one of the virgins which seemed

goddesses followed certain waiting servants. Castor and Pollux went behind Juno, having on their heads helmets covered with stars. This virgin Juno sounded a flute, which she bore in her hand, and moved herself towards the shepherd Paris, showing by honest signs and tokens, and promising, that he should be Lord of all Asia if he would judge her the fairest of the three, and give her the apple of gold. The other maiden, who seemed by her armour to be Pallas, was accompanied with two young men, armed and brandishing their naked swords in their hands, whereof one was named Terror and the other Fear. Behind them approached one sounding his trumpet to provoke and stir men to battle. This maiden began to dance and shake her head, throwing her fierce and terrible eyes upon Paris, and promising that if it pleased him to give her the victory of beauty she would make him the most strong and victorious man alive.

Then came Venus and presented herself in the middle of the theatre, with much favour of all the people, for she was accompanied with a great number of youths, whom you would have judged to be all Cupids, either to have flown from heaven, or else from the river of the sea, for they had wings, arrows and the residue of their habit according in each point, and they bore in their hands torches lighted, as though it had been a day of marriage. Then came in a great multitude of fair maidens. On the one side were the most comely Graces ; on the other side the most

beautiful Hours, carrying garlands and loose flowers, and making great honour to the goddess of pleasure. The flutes and pipes yielded out the sweet sound of Lydian airs, whereby they pleased the minds of the standers-by exceedingly ; but the more pleasing Venus moved forward more and more, and, shaking her head, answered by her motion and gesture to the sound of the instruments. For sometimes she would wink gently, sometimes threaten and look asperly, and sometimes dance only with her eyes. As soon as she was come before the judge, she made a sign and token to give him the most fair spouse of all the world if he would prefer her above the residue of the goddesses. Then the young Phrygian shepherd Paris, with a willing mind, delivered the golden apple to Venus, who was the victory of beauty.

Why do ye marvel, ye orators, ye lawyers and advocates, if many of our judges nowadays sell their judgements for money, when in the beginning of the world one only Grace corrupted the sentence between God and men, and that one rustical judge and shepherd, appointed by the counsel of the great Jupiter, sold his judgement for a little pleasure, which was the cause afterwards of the ruin of all his progeny ? By like manner of means was sentence given between the noble Greeks ; for the noble and valiant personage Palamedes was convicted and attainted of treason by false persuasion and accusation, and Ulysses, being but of base condition, was preferred in

martial prowess above great Ajax. What judgement was there likewise amongst the Athenian lawyers, sage and expert in all sciences? Was not Socrates, who was preferred by the god Apollo above all the wise men of the world, by envy and malice of wicked persons poisoned with the herb cicuta, as one that corrupted the youth of the country, whom always he kept under by correction? For we see nowadays many excellent philosophers greatly desire to follow his sect, and by perpetual study to volve and revolve his work. But to the end I may not be reproved of indignation by anyone that might say, "What, shall we suffer an ass to play the philosopher?" I will return to my former purpose.

After the judgement of Paris was ended, Juno and Pallas departed away angrily, showing by their gesture that they would revenge themselves on Paris, but Venus, who was right pleased and glad in her heart, danced about the theatre with much joy. This done, from the top of the hill through a privy spout ran a flood of the colour of saffron, which fell upon the goats, and changed their white hair into yellow, with a sweet odour to all them of the theatre. By and by after, by certain engines, the ground opened and swallowed up the hill of wood. And then, behold, there came a man of arms through the middle of the multitude, demanding by the consent of the people the woman who was condemned to the beasts.

Then I, since now I must myself enter the

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theatre, did greatly fear the danger of death. For I thought in myself that the savage beast appointed to devour the woman was not so instructed and taught, or would so temper his greediness, as that he would spare me with a regard of mine innocence. Wherefore I was careful for the safeguard of my life ; but all the residue greatly delighted to see the hunting and pleasantness of the triumph. Then I began to think and devise for myself, and when I perceived that no man had regard to me, that was so tame and gentle an ass, I stole out of the gate that was next me, and then I ran away with all my force and came to Cenchris, which is the most famous town of all the Carthaginians, bordering upon the seas called Ageum and Saronicum, where is a great and mighty haven frequented with many a sundry nation. There, to the end I might avoid the multitude of people, I went to a secret place of the sea coast, where I laid me down upon the sand to ease and refresh myself, for the day was past and the sun gone down ; and I lying in this sort on the ground fell into a sound sleep.

Here ends the Tenth Book of Lucius Apuleius

THE ELEVENTH BOOK
OF LUCIUS APULEIUS OF
THE GOLDEN ASS



THE ELEVENTH BOOK OF LUCIUS APULEIUS OF THE GOLDEN ASS

*XLVII.—How Apuleius by roses and prayer
returned to his human shape*

WHEN midnight came, and I had slept my first sleep, I awaked with sudden fear, and saw the moon shining bright, as when she is at the full, and seeming as though she leaped out of the sea. Then I thought with myself that that was the most secret time, when the goddess Ceres had most puissance and force, considering that all human things be governed by her providence ; and not only all beasts private and tame, but also all wild and savage beasts be under her protection. And considering that all bodies in the heavens, the earth and the seas be by her increasing motions increased, and by her diminishing motions diminished, as weary of all my cruel fortune and calamity, I found good hope and sovereign remedy, though it were very late, to be delivered from all my misery, by invocation and prayer to the excellent beauty of the goddess, whom I saw shining before my eyes. Wherefore, shaking off my assy and drowsy sleep, I arose with

a joyful face, and moved by a great affection to purify myself, I plunged my head seven times into the water of the sea, which number of seven is convenable and agreeable to holy and divine things, as the worthy and sage philosopher Pythagoras hath declared. Then with a weeping countenance I made this orison to the puissant goddess, saying, "O blessed queen of heaven, whether thou be the dame Ceres which art the original and motherly nurse of all fruitful things in the earth, who, after the finding of thy daughter Proserpina, through the great joy which thou didst presently conceive, madest the barren and unfruitful ground to be ploughed and sown, and now thou inhabitest in the land of Eleusis; or whether thou be the celestial Venus, who in the beginning of the world didst couple together all kinds of things with an engendered love and by an eternal propagation of human kind, and art now worshipped within the temples of the isle Paphos; thou which art the sister of the good Phœbus, who nourishest so many people by the generation of beasts, and art now adored at the sacred places of Ephesus; thou which art called horrible Proserpina, by reason of the deadly howlings which thou yieldest, that hast power to stop and put away the invasion of hags and ghosts which appear to men, and to keep them down in the closures of the earth; thou which art worshipped in divers manners, and dost illuminate all the borders of the earth by thy feminine shape; thou which nourishest all the fruits of the world by thy vigour

and force, with whatsoever name or fashion it is lawful to call upon thee, I pray thee to end my great travail and misery, and deliver me from the wretched fortune which hath so long time pursued me. Grant peace and rest, if it please thee, to my adversities, for I have endured too much labour and peril. Remove from me my shape of an ass, and render me to my pristine estate ; and if I have offended in any point thy divine majesty, let me rather die than live, for I am full weary of my life."

When I had ended this orison, and discovered my complaints to the goddess, I fortunèd to fall asleep, and by and by appeared to me a divine and venerable face, worshipped even of the gods themselves. Then by little and little I seemed to see the whole figure of her body mounting out of the sea and standing before me : wherefore I purpose to describe her divine semblance, if the poverty of my human speech will suffer me, or her divine power give me eloquence thereto.

First, she had a great abundance of hair, dispersed and scattered about her neck. On the crown of her head she bore many garlands, interlaced with flowers. In the middle of her forehead was a compass, in fashion of a glass, or resembling the light of the moon. In one of her hands she bore serpents, in the other blades of corn. Her vestment was of fine silk, yielding divers colours, sometimes white, sometimes yellow, sometimes rosy, sometimes flamy, and sometimes (which troubled my spirit sore) dark and obscure, covered with a black robe in manner of a shield, and

pleated in most subtle fashion at the skirts of her garment. The welts appeared comely where here and there the stars glimpsed, and in the middle of them was placed the moon, which shone like a flame of fire. Round about the robe was a coronet or garland made with flowers and fruit. In her right hand she had a timbrel of brass, which gave a pleasant sound ; in her left hand she bore a cup of gold, out of the mouth whereof the serpent Aspis lifted up his head, with a swelling throat. Her odoriferous feet were covered with shoes, interlaced and wrought with victorious palm.

Thus the divine shape, breathing out the pleasant spice of fertile Arabia, disdained not with her divine voice to utter these words to me : “ Behold, Lucius, I am come. Thy weeping and prayers have moved me to succour thee. I am she that is the natural mother of all things, mistress and governess of all the elements, the initial progeny of worlds, chief of the powers divine, queen of heaven, the principal of the gods celestial, the light of the goddesses. At my will the planets of the air, the wholesome winds of the seas and the silences of hell be disposed. My name, my divinity, is adored throughout all the world, in divers manners, in variable customs and in many names, for the Phrygians call me the mother of the gods ; the Athenians, Minerva ; the Cyprians, Venus ; the Candians, Diana ; the Sicilians, Proserpina ; the Eleusians, Ceres ; some Juno, others Bellona, others Hecate ; and principally the Ethiopians who dwell in the Orient,

and the Egyptians, who are excellent in all kinds of ancient doctrine, and by their proper ceremonies accustom to worship me, do call me Queen Isis. Behold, I am come to take pity of thy fortune and tribulation ! behold, I am present to favour and aid thee ! Leave off thy weeping and lamentation, put away all thy sorrow, for behold the healthful day which is ordained by my providence. Therefore be ready and attentive to my commandment. The day which shall come after this night is dedicate to my service by an eternal religion. My priests and ministers do accustom, after the tempests of the sea be ceased, to offer in my name a new ship, as a first-fruit of their navigation. I command thee not to profane or despise the sacrifice in any wise, for the great priest shall carry this day following in procession by my exhortation a garland of roses next to the timbrel of his right hand. Follow thou my procession amongst the people, and when thou comest to the priest make as though thou wouldst kiss his hand, but snatch at the roses, whereby I will put away the skin and shape of an ass, which kind of beast I have long time abhorred and despised. But above all things beware thou doubt not nor fear any of those things as hard and difficult to be brought to pass, for in this same hour that I come to thee I have commanded the priest by a vision what he shall do, and all the people by my commandment shall be compelled to give thee place and say nothing. Moreover, think not that amongst so fair and joyful

ceremonies, and in so good a company, any person shall abhor thy ill-favoured and deformed figure, or that any man shall be so hardy as to blame and reprove thy sudden restoration to human shape, whereby they should gather or conceive any sinister opinion. And know thou this of certainty, that the residue of thy life until the hour of death shall be bound and subject to me. And think it not an injury to be always serviceable towards me, since by my means and benefit thou shalt become a man. Thou shalt live blessed in this world, thou shalt live glorious by my guidance and protection ; and when thou descendest to hell, where thou shalt see me in that subterrene place, shining (as thou seest me now) in the darkness of Acheron, and reigning in the deep profundity of Styx, thou shalt worship me as one that hath been favourable to thee. And if I perceive that thou art obedient to my commandment, addict to my religion, and merit my divine grace, know thou that I will prolong thy days above the time that the fates have appointed and the celestial planets ordained."

When the divine image had spoken these words she vanished away.

By and by, when I awaked, I arose, having the members of my body mixed with fear, joy and sweat, and marvelled at the clear presence of the puissant goddess ; and being sprinkled with the water of the sea, I recounted orderly her admonitions and divine commandments.

Soon after, the darkness chased away, and the clear and golden sun arose, when, behold, I saw

the streets replenished with people, going in a religious sort, and in great triumph. All things seemed that day to be joyful, as well all manner of beasts, and the very houses, as also the very day itself seemed to rejoice. For after the hoar frost ensued the hot and temperate sun, whereby the little birds, weening that the spring-time had been come, did chirp and sing in their steven melodiously, "The mother of stars, the parent of times and mistress of all the world." The fruitful trees rejoiced at their fertility. The barren and sterile were contented at their shadow, rendering sweet and pleasant shrills. The seas were quiet from winds and tempests. The heaven had chased away the clouds, and appeared fair and clear with his proper light.

Behold, then, more and more appeared the pomps and processions, attired in regal manner, and singing joyfully. One was girded about the middle like a man of arms. Another bore a spear, and had a cloak and high shoes as a hunter; another was attired in a robe of silk and socks of gold, having his hair laid out, and dressed in form of a woman. There was another who wore leg harness and bore a target, a sallet and a spear, like a martial soldier. After him marched one attired in purple, with vergers before him, like a magistrate. After him followed one with a mantle, a staff, a pair of pantoufles and with a grey beard, signifying a philosopher. After him went one with lime, betokening a fowler; another with hooks, declaring a fisher. I saw there a meek and

tame bear, which in matron habit was carried on a stool; an ape with a bonnet on his head, and covered with lawn, resembling a shepherd, and bearing a cup of gold in his hand; an ass which had wings glued to his back, and went after an old man, whereby you would judge the one to be Pegasus and the other Bellerophon.

Amongst these pleasures and popular delectations, which wandered hither and thither, you might see the pomp of the goddess triumphantly march forward. The women, attired in white vestments, and rejoicing in that they bore garlands and flowers upon their heads, bespread the ways with herbs (which they bore in their aprons), where this regal and devout procession should pass. Others carried glasses on their backs, to testify obeisance and honour to the goddess who came after. Others bore combs of ivory, and declared by their gesture and motions of their arms that they were ordained and ready to dress the goddess. Others dropped in the ways, as they went, balm and other precious ointments. Then came a great number, as well of men as of women, with candles, torches and other lights, doing honour to the celestial goddess. After that sounded the musical harmony of instruments. Then came a fair company of youth, apparelled in white vestments, singing both metre and verse, with a comely grace, which some studious poet had made in honour of the Muses.

In the mean season arrived the blowers of trumpets, dedicated to Serapis, and to the temple,

before them, were officers and beadles, preparing room for the goddess to pass. Then came the great company of men and women who had taken divine orders, whose garments glistened all the streets over. The women had their hair anointed, and their heads covered with linen ; but the men had their crowns shaven, seeing that they were as the terrene stars of the goddess, holding in their hands instruments of brass, silver and gold, which rendered a pleasant sound. The principal priests, who were apparelled with white surplices hanging down to the ground, bore the relics of that puissant goddess. One carried in his hand a light, not unlike those which we used in our houses, saving that in the middle thereof appeared a bowl which rendered a more bright flame. The second, attired like the other, bore in his hands an altar, which the goddess herself named the Succour of Nations. The third held up a tree of palm with leaves of gold, the birchen rod of Mercury. The fourth showed out a token of equity by his left hand, deformed in every place, signifying thereby more equity than by the right hand. The same priest carried a round vessel of gold in form of a cap. The fifth bore a van [winnowing fan], wrought with sprigs of gold, and another carried a vessel for wine.

Immediately after, the gods followed, a-foot as men do, and especially Mercury, the messenger of the gods infernal and supernal, with his face sometimes black, sometimes fair, lifting up the head of the dog Anubis, and bearing in his left

hand his rod, and in his right hand the branch of a palm tree. After him followed a cow with an upright gait, representing the figure of the great goddess, and he that guided her marched on with much gravity. Another carried after the secrets of their religion, closed in a coffer. There was one who bore on his stomach the figure of his god, not formed like any beast, bird, savage thing, or human shape, but made by a new invention, whereby was signified that such a religion should not be discovered or revealed to any person. There was a vessel wrought with a round bottom, having on the one side pictures figured like to the manner of the Egyptians, and on the other side was an ear, whereupon stood the serpent Aspis, holding out his scaly neck.

Finally came he which was appointed to my good fortune, according to the promise of the goddess. For the great priest who bore the restoration of my human shape, by the commandment of the goddess, approached more and more, bearing in his left hand the timbrel, and in the other a garland of roses to give me, to the end I might be delivered from cruel fortune, which was always my enemy, after the sufferance of so much calamity and pain, and after the endurance of so many perils.

Then I, not running hastily, by reason of sudden joy, lest I should disturb the quiet procession with my importunity, but going softly through the press of people, who gave me place on every side, went after the priest. The priest,

being admonished the night before, as I might well perceive, stood still, and holding out his hand thrust the garland of roses into my mouth, which I (trembling) devoured with a great affection. And as soon as I had eaten them I was not deceived of the promise made to me, for my deformed and assy face abated, and first the rugged hair of my body fell off, my thick skin waxed soft and tender, the hooves of my feet changed into toes, my hands returned again, my neck grew short, my head and mouth became round, my long ears were made little, my great and stony teeth waxed less, like the teeth of men, and my tail, which cumbered me most, appeared nowhere. Then the people began to marvel, and the religious honoured the goddess for so evident a miracle. They wondered at the visions which they saw in the night, and the facility of my reformation, wherefore they rendered testimony of so great a benefit which I received of the goddess.

When I saw myself in such estate I stood still a good space and said nothing, for I could not tell what to say, nor what word I should first speak, nor what thanks I should render to the goddess. But the great priest, understanding all my fortune and misery by divine advertisement, commanded that one should give me garments to cover me. Then one of the company put off his upper robe and put it on my back, which done, the priest, looking upon me, with a sweet and benign voice spoke in this sort, " O my friend Lucius, after the endurance of so many labours and the escape of

so many tempests of fortune, thou art now at length come to the port and haven of rest and mercy. Neither did thy noble lineage, thy dignity, neither thy doctrine any thing prevail, but that thou hast endured so many servile pleasures, by a little folly of thy youthfulness, whereby thou hast had a sinister reward of thy unprosperous curiosity. But howsoever the blindness of fortune tormented thee in divers dangers, so it is that now, unawares to her, thou art come to this present felicity. Let fortune go and fume with fury in another place, let her find some other matter to execute her cruelty, for fortune hath no puissance against them which serve and honour our goddess ; for what availed the thieves ? the beasts savage ? thy great servitude ? the ill and dangerous ways ? the long passages ? the fear of death every day ? Know thou that now thou art safe, and under the protection of her who by her clear light doth lighten the other gods : wherefore rejoice, and take a convenable countenance to thy white habit. Follow the pomp of this devout and honourable procession, to the end that such as be not devout to the goddess may see and acknowledge their error. Behold, Lucius, thou art delivered from so great miseries by the providence of the goddess Isis ! Rejoice, therefore, and triumph of the victory of fortune. To the end thou mayst live more safe and sure, make thyself one of this holy order, dedicate thy mind to the obsequy ¹ of our

¹ Following.—ED.

religion, and take upon thee a voluntary yoke of ministry. And when thou beginnest to serve and honour the goddess, then shalt thou feel the fruit of thy liberty."

After that the great priest had prophesied in this manner, with often breathings, he made a conclusion of his words. Then I went amongst the company of the rest and followed the procession. Every one of the people knew me, and pointing at me with their fingers said in this sort, "Behold him who is this day transformed into a man by the puissance of the sovereign goddess! Verily he is blessed and most blessed that hath merited so great grace from heaven, by the innocency of his former life, and as it were by a new regeneration is reserved to the obsequy of the goddess."

In the mean season by little and little we approached nigh to the sea coast, even to that place where I lay the night before, being an ass. There, after the images and relics were orderly disposed, the great priest, compassed about with divers pictures according to the fashion of the Egyptians, did dedicate and consecrate with certain prayers a fair ship made very cunningly, and purified the same with a torch, an egg and sulphur. The sail was of white linen cloth, whereon was written certain letters, which testified the navigation to be prosperous. The mast was of a great length, made of a pine tree, round, and very excellent with a shining top; the cabin was covered over with coverings of gold, and all the ship was made

of citron tree, very fair. Then all the people, as well religious as profane, took a great number of vases, replenished with odours and pleasant smells, and threw them into the sea mingled with milk, until the ship was filled up with large gifts and prosperous devotions, when with a pleasant wind it launched out into the deep ; but when they had lost the sight of the ship every man carried again that which he brought, and went towards the temple in like pomp and order as they came to the seaside.

When we were come to the temple, the great priest and those who were deputed to carry the divine figures, but especially those who had long time been worshippers of the religion, went into the secret chamber of the goddess, where they put and placed the images according to their order. This done, one of the company in form of a preacher stood up in a chair, and began to read out of a book and to interpret to the great prince, the senate, and to all the noble order of chivalry, and generally to all the Roman people, and to all such as be under the puissance and jurisdiction of Rome, these words following ; *πλοιαφέσια* (ploiaphésia),¹ which signified that it was lawful for every man to depart ; whereat all the people gave a great shout, and replenished with much joy bore all kinds of herbs and garlands of flowers home to their houses, kissing and embracing the steps where the goddess passed.

¹ "Departing of ships" ; corrected by Mommsen in the original.

Howbeit, I could not do as the rest, for my mind would not suffer me to depart one foot away, so earnest and attentive was I to behold the beauty of the goddess, with remembrance likewise of my great travail and misery which I had endured.

*XLVIII.—How the parents and friends of
Apuleius heard news that he was alive
and in health*

IN the mean season news was carried into my country (as swift as the flight of birds, or as the blast of winds) of the grace and benefit which I received of the goddess and of my fortune worthy to be had in memory. Then my parents, friends and servants of our house, understanding that I was not dead as they were falsely informed, came towards me with great diligence to see me, as a man raised from death to life. And I likewise, who did never think to see them again, was as joyful as they, accepting and taking in good part their honest gifts and oblations which they gave, to the intent I might buy such things as were necessary for my body.

After I had made relation to them of all my pristine misery and present joys, I went again before the face of the goddess and hired me a house within the cloister of the temple, to the end I might continually be ready to the service of the goddess, and ordinarily frequent the company of the priests, whereby I would wholly

become devout to the goddess and an inseparable worshipper of her divine name.

It fortune'd that the goddess appeared to me oftentimes in the night, persuading and commanding me to take the order of her religion ; but although I was endued with a desirous goodwill, yet the reverend fear of the same withheld me, considering that her obeisance was hard and difficult, the chastity of the priests intolerable, and the life frail and subject to many inconveniences. Being thus in doubt I refrained myself from all those things, as seeming impossible.

On a night the great priest appeared to me presenting his lap full of treasure, and when I demanded what it signified, he answered that it was sent me from the country of Thessaly, and that a servant of mine named Candidus was arrived likewise. When I was awaked, I mused in myself what this vision should portend, considering I never had any servant called by that name ; but whatsoever it did signify, this I verily thought, that it was a foreshow of gain and prosperous chance. While I was thus astonished I went to the temple, and tarried there till the opening of the gates. Then I went in and began to pray before the face of the goddess ; the priest prepared and set the divine things on every altar, and pulled out of the fountain the holy vessel, with solemn supplication. Then they began to sing the matins of the morning, testifying thereby the hour of the prime.

By and by, behold, arrived my servants whom

I had left in the country when Fotis by error made me an ass, bringing with them my horse, recovered by her through certain signs and tokens which he had upon his back. Then I perceived the interpretation of my dream, by reason that beside the promise of gain, my white horse was restored to me, which was signified by the argument of my servant Candidus.

This done, I retired to the service of the goddess, in hope of greater benefits, considering I had received a sign and token, whereby my courage increased every day more and more to take upon me the orders and sacraments of the temple, insomuch that I oftentimes communed with the priest, desiring him greatly to give me the first degree of the religion. But he, who was a man of gravity, and well renowned in the order of priesthood, deferred my affection from day to day with comfort of better hope, as parents commonly bridle the desires of their children when they attempt or endeavour any unprofitable thing, saying that the day when anyone should be admitted into their order is appointed by the goddess, the priest which should minister the sacrifice is chosen by her providence, and the necessary charges of the ceremonies are allotted by her commandment ; all which things he willed me to attend with marvellous patience, and that I should beware either of too much hastiness or too great slackness, considering that there was like danger if being called I should delay, or not called I should be hasty. Moreover, he said that

there was none of his company either of so desperate a mind, or so rash and hardy, as to enterprize anything without the commandment of the goddess, lest he should commit a deadly offence, considering that it was in her power to damn and save all persons ; and if any were at the point of death and in the way to damnation, so that he were capable to receive the secrets of the goddess, it was in her power by divine providence to reduce him to the path of health, as by a certain kind of regeneration. Finally he said that I must attend the celestial precept, although it was evident and plain that the goddess had already vouchsafed to call and appoint me to her ministry, and to will me to refrain from profane and unlawful meats, as those priests which were already received, to the end I might come more apt and clean to the knowledge of the secrets of the religion.

Then I was obedient to these words, and attentive with meek quietness and probable taciturnity I daily served at the temple. In the end the wholesome gentleness of the goddess nothing deceived me, for in a night she appeared to me in a vision, declaring that the day was come which I had wished for so long. She told me what provision and charges I should be at, and how she had appointed her principal priest Mithra to be a minister with me in my sacrifices.

When I had heard these divine commandments I greatly rejoiced, and arose before day to speak with the great priest, whom I fortun'd to espy

coming out of his chamber. Then I saluted him, and thought with myself to ask and demand his counsel with a bold courage ; but as soon as he perceived me he began first to say, " O Lucius, now know I well that thou art most happy and blessed, whom the divine goddess doth so greatly accept with mercy ; why dost thou delay ? Behold the day which thou didst desire, when thou shalt receive at my hands the order of religion and know the most pure secrets of the goddess." Whereupon the old man took me by the hand and led me to the gate of the great temple, where at his first entry he made a solemn celebration ; and after the morning sacrifice was ended he brought out of the secret place of the temple certain books, partly written with unknown characters, and partly painted with figures of beasts, declaring briefly every sentence, with tops and tails turned round in fashion of a wheel, which were wholly strange and impossible to be read of the profane people. There he interpreted to me such things as were necessary to the use and preparation of my order. This done, I gave in charge to certain of my companions to buy liberally whatsoever was needful and convenient. Then he brought me to the nearest baths, accompanied with all the religious sort, and demanding pardon of the gods, washed me and purified my body according to the custom. After this, when noon approached, he brought me back again to the temple and presented me before the face of the goddess, giving a charge of certain secret things unlawful

to be uttered, and commanding me, and generally all the rest, to fast by the space of ten continual days without eating of any beast or drinking of any wine ; which things I observed with a marvellous continency.

Then, behold, the day approached when the sacrifice should be done ; and when night came there arrived on every coast a great multitude of priests, who, according to their order, offered me many presents and gifts. Then were all the laity and profane people commanded to depart, and when they had put on my back a linen robe they brought me to the most secret and sacred place of the temple. You would peradventure demand, you studious reader, what was said and done there. Verily I would tell you if it were lawful for me to tell : you should know if it were convenient for you to hear ; but both thy ears and my tongue shall incur the like pain of rash curiosity. Howbeit, I will content thy mind for this present time, which peradventure is somewhat religious and given to some devotion. Listen, therefore, and believe it to be true.

Thou shalt understand that I approached near to hell, even to the gates of Proserpina, and after I was ravished throughout all the elements, I returned to my proper place. About midnight I saw the sun shine ; I saw likewise the gods celestial and gods infernal, before whom I presented myself and worshipped them. Behold now have I told thee, which although thou hast heard, yet it is necessary that you conceal it, for

this have I declared without offence, for the understanding of the profane.

When morning came and the solemnities were finished, I came forth sanctified, with twelve stoles and in a religious habit, whereof I am not forbidden to speak, considering that many persons saw me at that time. There I was commanded to stand upon a seat of wood which stood in the middle of the temple, before the figure and remembrance of the goddess. My vestment was of fine linen, covered and embroidered with flowers. I had a precious cope upon my shoulders hanging down to the ground, whereon were beasts wrought of divers colours, as Indian dragons and Hyperborean griffins, whom in form of birds the other world doth engender. The priests commonly call such a habit a celestial stole. In my right hand I carried a light torch, and a garland of flowers upon my head, with palm leaves sprouting out on every side. I was adorned like to the sun, and made in fashion of an image, in such sort that all the people compassed about to behold me. Then they began to solemnise the feast of my nativity, and the new procession, with sumptuous banquets and delicate meats. The third day was likewise celebrated with like ceremonies, with a religious dinner and with all the consummation of the order.

When I had continued there a good space, I conceived a marvellous pleasure and consolation in beholding ordinarily the image of the goddess, who at length admonished me to depart

homeward, not without rendering of thanks, which although they were not sufficient, yet they were according to my power. Howbeit, I could by no means be persuaded to depart before I had fallen prostrate before the face of the goddess, and wiped her steps with my face ; whereupon I began so greatly to weep and sigh that my words were interrupted, and as devouring my prayer I began to say in this sort, “ O holy and blessed dame, the perpetual comfort of human kind, who by thy bounty and grace nourishest all the world, and bearest a great affection to the adversities of the miserable as a loving mother, thou takest no rest, neither art thou idle at any time in giving thy benefits, and succouring all men as well on land as sea ; thou art she who puttest away all storms and dangers from man’s life by thy right hand. Likewise thou restrainest the fatal dispositions, appeasest the great tempests of fortunes and keepest back the course of the stars. The gods supernal do honour thee ; the gods infernal have thee in reverence. Thou environest all the world, thou givest light to the sun, thou governest the world, thou treadest down the power of hell. By thy means the times return, the planets rejoice, the elements serve : at thy commandment the winds do blow, the clouds increase, the seeds prosper, and the fruits prevail ; the birds of the air, the beasts of the hill, the serpents of the den and the fishes of the sea do tremble at thy majesty. But my spirit is not able to give thee sufficient praise, my patrimony is unable to satisfy thy

sacrifice, my voice hath no power to utter that which I think, no, not if I had a thousand mouths and so many tongues. Howbeit, as a good religious person, and according to my estate, I will always keep thee in remembrance, and close thee within my breast."

When I had ended my orison, I went to embrace the great priest Mithra, my spiritual father, and to demand his pardon, considering I was unable to recompense the good which he had done me. After great greetings and thanks I departed from him to visit my parents and friends. And within a while after, by the exhortation of the goddess, I made up my packet and took shipping towards the city of Rome, where, with a prosperous wind, I arrived about the twelfth day of December. And the greatest desire which I had there was daily to make my prayers to the sovereign goddess Isis, who, by reason of the place where her temple was built, was called Campensis, and continually adored of the people of Rome. Her minister and worshipper was I; howbeit, I was a stranger to her Church, and unknown to her religion there.

When the year was ended, and the goddess warned me again to receive this new order and consecration, I marvelled greatly what it should signify, and what should happen, considering that I was a sacred person already. But it fortunately that while I partly reasoned with myself, and partly examined the thing with the priests and bishops, there came a new and marvellous

thought to my mind—that is to say, I was only religious to the goddess Isis, but not sacred to the religion of great Osiris, the sovereign father of all the gods, between whom, although there was a religious unity and concord, yet there was a great difference of order and ceremony. And because it was necessary that I should likewise be a minister to Osiris, there was no long delay ; for in the night after appeared to me one of that order, covered with linen robes, holding in his hands spears wrapped in ivy, and other things not convenient to declare, which he left in my chamber, and sitting in my seat, recited to me such things as were necessary for the sumptuous banquet of my entry. And to the end I might know him again, he showed me how the ankle of his left foot was somewhat maimed, which caused him a little to halt.

After I manifestly knew the will of the god Osiris, when matins were ended I went from one to another to find him out who had the halting mark of his foot, according as I learned by my vision. At length I found it true, for I perceived one of the company of the priests who had not only the token of his foot, but the stature and habit of his body resembling in every point as he appeared in the night. He was called Asinius Marcellus, a name not much disagreeing from my transformation. By and by I went to him, who knew well enough all the matter, as being monished by like precept in the night ; for the night before, as he dressed the flowers and

garlands about the head of the god Osiris, he understood by the mouth of his image, which told the predestination of all men, how he had sent a poor man of Madaura, to whom he should minister his sacraments, to the end that he should receive a reward by divine providence, and the other glory, for his virtuous studies.

When I saw myself thus deputed to religion, my desire was stopped by reason of poverty, for I had spent a great part of my goods in travel and peregrination, but most of all in the city of Rome, whereby my low estate withdrew me a great while. In the end, being oftentimes stirred forward, not without great trouble of mind, I was constrained to sell my robe for a little money: howbeit, sufficient for all my affairs. Then the priest spoke to me, saying, "How is it that for a little pleasure thou art not afeard to sell thy vestments, but entering into so great ceremonies dost fear to fall into poverty? Prepare thyself, and abstain from all animal meats, as beasts and fish." In the mean season I frequented the sacrifices of Serapis, which were done in the night, which thing gave me great comfort to my peregrination, and ministered to me more plentiful living, considering I gained some money in haunting to the courts, by reason of my Latin tongue.

Immediately after, I was eftsoons called and admonished by the god Osiris to receive a third order of religion. Then I was greatly astonished, because I could not tell what this new vision

signified, or what the intent of the celestial gods was, doubting lest the former priests had given me ill counsel, and fearing that they had not faithfully instructed me. Being in this manner as it were incensed, the god Osiris appeared to me the night following, and gave me admonition, saying, "There is no occasion why thou shouldst be afraid with so often order of religion, as though there were somewhat omitted, but thou shouldst rather rejoice, since it hath pleased the gods to call thee three times, when there was never yet any person that achieved to the order but once ; wherefore thou mayst think thyself most happy for so great benefits. And know thou that the religion which thou must now receive is right necessary if thou mean to persevere in the worshipping of the goddess and to make solemnity on the festival day with thy blessed habit, which thing shall be a glory and renown to thee."

After this sort the divine majesty persuaded me in my sleep, whereupon by and by I went towards the priest and declared all that which I had seen. Then I fasted the space of ten days according to the custom, and of my own proper will I abstained longer than I was commanded. And verily I did nothing repent of the pains which I had taken and of the charges which I was at, considering that the divine providence had given me such an order that I gained much money in pleading of causes.

Finally after a few days the great god Osiris appeared to me in the night, not disguised in any

other form but in his own essence, commanding me that I should be an advocate in the court, and not fear the slander and envy of ill persons who bore me stomach and grudge by reason of my doctrine, which I had got by much labour. Moreover, he would not that I should be any longer of the number of his priests, but he allotted me to be one of the decurions and senators; and after he appointed me a place within the ancient palace, which was erected in the time of Sylla, where I executed my office in great joy with a shaven crown.



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The golden ass of **Lucius**
Apuleius

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